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'Beyond comprehension': Libya flooding leaves thousands dead

Fear that toll may hit 10,000 after burst dams unleash devastation

Patrick Wintour
Diplomatic editor

Aid organisations last night described the situation in the Libyan city of Derna as "disastrous beyond comprehension" as fears grew that 10,000 people may have been killed after two dams burst.

The confirmed death toll has exceeded 5,300, Mohammed Abu-Lamousha, a spokesperson for the administration that controls the east of Libya told a state-run news agency late yesterday.

Tariq al-Kharraz, another representative of the eastern government, said entire neighbourhoods had been washed away, with many bodies swept out to sea.

Hundreds of unidentified bodies were piled up in cemeteries, according to Kharraz, who said he expected the death toll to rise above 10,000 - a figure also quoted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Rami Elshaheibi, the Libyan national communications officer for the World Health Organization, said the situation in Derna was "disastrous beyond comprehension".

Hichem Chkiouat, the 4 →



▲ *Overturned cars and debris in a street in the port city of Derna, eastern Libya, yesterday. Many bodies were swept out to sea* PHOTOGRAPH: AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Pension triple lock faces one-off cut to save £1bn

Pippa Crerar
Larry Elliott

Treasury officials are discussing a one-off break from the pensions triple lock that could save £1bn by preventing a bumper 8.5% increase in the state pension next year.

The government is considering stripping out public sector bonuses that were awarded to workers to prevent strikes over the summer from the calculation that determines the annual rise in pensions.

Ministers will consider whether to instead adopt an earnings link that tracks the underlying level of pay growth, which could mean pensions increasing at the lower level of 7.8% from April 2024.

Any change to the way the state pension is calculated would be controversial because the Conservatives pledged in their last election manifesto to abide by the formula, which guarantees an increase in line with average earnings, inflation or 2.5%, whichever is highest.

However, government insiders believe they could justify "tweaking" the way that they calculate the annual increase as a one-off because otherwise pensions would continue to rise far more quickly than wages, which could be regarded as unfair by working people. The triple lock was temporarily suspended earlier in the parliament when the end of lockdown restrictions led to double-digit earnings growth.

Rishi Sunak refused on Sunday to commit to keeping the pensions triple lock, which was introduced in 2011, in the next manifesto as he grapples with how to fund tax cuts demanded by his own MPs.

Mel Stride, the work and pensions secretary, acknowledged yesterday that while the 6 →

The Van Gogh in an Ikea bag
How stolen £3m painting became too hot to handle

News *Page 3* →

VISIT…

LANZAROTE Caliente.com

Inside *13/09/23*
Four sections every day

News and Sport

Pollution
Government may have broken law by failing to stop sewage dumping in rivers
Page 7

Journal Outside G2
Opinions and ideas

Keir Starmer is right to be cautious - voters distrust big promises
Rafael Behr
Page 1

G2 Centre pullout
Features and arts

Love around the world
Fleur Pierets remarried her wife four times, in four different countries
Page 2

Save up to 34% with a subscription to the Guardian and the Observer
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Weather
Page 36

Quick crossword
Back of G2

Cartoon
Journal, page 4

Cryptic crossword
Back of Journal

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News

Kim crosses border for talks on replenishing Russia's arsenals

Justin McCurry *Tokyo*
Andrew Roth

Kim Jong-un arrived in Russia on his armoured train for a rare summit with Vladimir Putin to discuss a possible deal to supply North Korean arms for the war in Ukraine.

The train arrived at Khasan station, the main rail gateway to Russia's far east from North Korea, where Kim was filmed alighting and meeting the Russian environment minister, before continuing to travel north.

Kim, reportedly accompanied by senior arms industry and military officials, could meet Putin today after the Eastern Economic Forum in the Russian port city of Vladivostok. Putin has already arrived.

The current route of his armoured train, however, indicates that he will not visit Vladivostok and will go toward the remote Amur region instead. Putin has said he will visit the Vostochny cosmodrome in that region today, and the space base would provide a secure location for their summit. It would also be a symbolic venue as two isolated leaders to build cooperation in the military and aerospace fields. North Korea has had several failed space launches and may seek Russia's aid to put its spy satellites into orbit. But so far the venue and the time of the meeting has not been confirmed.

"When I get there, you will know," Putin said during a discussion at the forum in Vladivostok yesterday.

Kim's trip to Russia and meeting with Putin will be a full-scale visit to strengthen ties, according to the Kremlin spokesperson. "There will be negotiations between two delegations, and after that, if necessary, the leaders will continue their communication in a one-on-one format," Dmitry Peskov said.

He added that neither leader planned to hold a news conference, according to Russia news agencies.

There are concerns in the west that Pyongyang plans to provide weapons to Moscow to replace stocks that have been heavily depleted during 18 months of fighting in Ukraine. The shortage in ammunition has forced Russia to conserve its shells and rockets, impose daily fire limits, and focus more on precision guided types of munitions over volumes of fire, said Michael Kofman, a senior fellow in the Russia and Eurasia Programme at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

"Russia is mobilising production, but output will be quite short of their needs," he said. "Therefore they are likely to seek import from any source that can help make up for the deficit."



▲ *Kim leaves Pyongyang. He may meet Putin at a far-east cosmodrome*

Yesterday, Peskov dismissed US warnings on any arms deal, with Russian agencies quoting him as saying: "As you know, while implementing our relations with our neighbours, including North Korea, the interests of our two countries are important to us, and not warnings from Washington. It is the interests of our two countries that we will focus on."

Kim was accompanied by senior government officials, including military personnel, North Korea's official KCNA news agency said. The delegation is thought to include his foreign minister, Choe Son-hui, and prominent party members in charge of defence industry and military affairs, including the munitions industry department's director, Jo Chun-ryong.

Michael Madden, a North Korea leadership expert at the Washington-based Stimson Center, said: "The presence of Jo Chun-ryong indicates that North Korea and Russia will conclude some type of agreement for munitions purchases."

Earlier, KCNA released photos of Kim's departure from Pyongyang, where there were military guards of honour and crowds of people wearing dark suits and colourful dresses who waved flowers and flags as he crossed a red carpet and boarded the green and yellow train.

US officials believe Putin is likely to focus on securing more supplies of North Korean artillery and other ammunition as he attempts to defuse a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

In return, Kim could seek energy and food aid, as well as advanced technology for satellites and nuclear-powered submarines that could increase the threat posed by North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear weapons programmes.

Some analysts believe, however, that Russia would be reluctant to share details of its closely guarded weapons technology in return for limited supplies of artillery shells and other munitions.

Prof Leif-Eric Easley, a North Korea expert at Ewha University in Seoul, said: "Putin is unlikely to provide Kim with technology to miniaturise nuclear devices or propel nuclear-powered submarines because even a desperate war machine does not trade its military crown jewels for old munitions."

On Monday, the US state department described Putin as desperate over the Ukraine conflict and renewed warnings that any arms deal could trigger US sanctions.

Leader's train

Bomb-proof carriages, pink armchairs - and paranoia

Justin McCurry

Joe Biden has Air Force One. Rishi Sunak has a fleet of RAF jets and helicopters. But when Kim Jong-un makes one of his rare journeys outside North Korea, he has an armoured train in which to while away the hours.

The North Korean leader's dark green train crossed the Russian border yesterday in advance of talks between Kim and Vladimir Putin on supplying the Kremlin with munitions for its war in Ukraine. The trip is Kim's first outside North Korea since the Covid-19 pandemic forced the country to close its borders, and his second meeting with Putin since the leaders held talks in Vladivostok in April 2019.

The summit will come at the end of a journey from the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, lasting an estimated 20 hours, during which time Kim will have prepared for the meeting, and rested in luxuriously decorated carriages that moved at a snail's pace through North Korea.



▲ *Kim Jong-un speaks with Chinese officials on his armoured train on an international trip in 2019*
PHOTOGRAPH: KCNA/KNS/AP

Kim does not reportedly share the fear of flying that led his father, Kim Jong-il, to travel long distances exclusively by rail; he flew to his 2018 summit in Singapore with Donald Trump, and to a meeting with the Chinese leader, Xi Jinping, the same year in the Chinese city of Dalian.

But the armoured train, which includes bedrooms and a meeting room fitted out with reddish-pink leather armchairs, appears to be Kim's preferred mode of transport. It took him 2,800 miles through China for his second summit with Trump, in Hanoi in 2019 - a journey that lasted two-and-a-half days.

Only a select few have seen the inside of the North Korean leader's armoured train, including a Russian official, Konstantin Pulikovsky, who in his book Orient Express recounted the fine-dining menus during a trip across Russia's far east with Kim Jong-il.

Passengers could choose from an eclectic range of dishes, including those from Korea and Japan, and a wine list that included Bordeaux and Burgundy, Pulikovsky wrote, adding that entertainment was provided by young female singers referred to as "lady conductors".

Protection for the line of North Korean dynastic leaders - who are reportedly paranoid about their personal security - comes from plates of armour installed beneath the carriages used as living quarters and meeting venues.

According to South Korean media reports, North Korea has 90 special carriages in total and operates three trains in tandem when a leader is travelling - one in front that handles security checks, one carrying the leader and his immediate entourage, and another behind for bodyguards and other personnel.

About 100 security agents are sent to stations en route to sweep for bombs, newspaper reports said, citing information provided by South Korean and US intelligence, and testimony from North Korean defectors. As Kim's train nears a station, the power on other tracks is shut off to halt the passage of trains in the area.

The train's sheer size and the additional weight from armoured reinforcements keep its average speed to a leisurely 35mph, giving Kim ample time to decide what he wants in return for the North Korean artillery shells and antitank missiles that have caught the eye of the Kremlin.

Kim is not the only official to have travelled abroad from North Korea by rail, however. In 2021, a group of Russian diplomats and their families made the journey across the border back to Russia on a hand-powered rail trolley.

▼ *Van Gogh's The Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring was stolen from a Dutch museum three years ago*
PHOTOGRAPH: GRONINGER MUSEUM/REUTERS



'A bit cursed': stolen Van Gogh recovered after proving too hot for the underworld

Senay Boztas
Amsterdam

It was a masterpiece with a curse: an early Van Gogh worth €3m-€6m (£2.6m-£5.2m) stolen from a Dutch museum three years ago was being passed around the criminal world like a hot potato.

"We knew that the painting would go from one hand to another hand in the criminal world, but that nobody really wanted to touch it because it wasn't worth anything," according to the art detective Arthur Brand, who is known for retrieving stolen artworks. "You could only get in trouble. So it was a little bit cursed."

Perhaps that is why on Monday night he received an unusual visitor at the door of his apartment in Amsterdam, holding a battered, blue Ikea bag. Brand ran up his stairs with the bag, carefully unwrapped a long painting from bubble wrap in front of a colleague videoing the moment, and compared the back with an image he had been sent as "proof-of-life" that the Van Gogh still existed. It was the same. "It's him," he said. "Vincent van Gogh is back. What a day."

The painting, The Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring, was stolen in a smash and grab in the early hours of 30 March 2020 from the small Singer Laren museum in the Netherlands. The gallery was closed owing to Covid restrictions at the time and the heist made headlines across the world.

But while the thief who walked off with the painting under his arm – named by Dutch media as Nils M – was behind bars, and so was Peter Roy K, the criminal who prosecutors believe ordered it, the early Van Gogh was nowhere to be found. That was until Brand, nicknamed the "Indiana Jones of the art world", had a lead.

In an arranged handover, with the agreement of the Dutch police, he took delivery of one of the world's most wanted paintings.

Brand, who is most famous for having recovered the "Hitler's Horses" bronze statues, a Picasso painting and a ring that once belonged to Oscar Wilde, told the Guardian that such a famous stolen item had become "a headache" and that the man who eventually handed it over had nothing to do with the theft.

"It was world news at the time when it was stolen. We are Dutch, it happened in the Netherlands, so it was a disaster," he said. "Luckily, the police were able to arrest everybody involved: the thief who got eight years and a fine for €8.7m, the intermediaries were caught, the buyer was caught, everybody was in jail, but the painting was still not there.

"Eventually, I got contacted by somebody who said: 'Mr Brand, I could turn in the Van Gogh, but I don't want to get into trouble. I had to gain his confidence, and when I had, he decided to deliver it to my home."



▲ *Art detective Arthur Brand: known as the Indiana Jones of the art world*

Waiting at the corner of the street in a bar was Andreas Blühm, the director of the Groninger Museum, which owns the painting – which had been out on loan – and who swiftly authenticated it. He said he was relieved and happy: "You always imagine this moment, and there were moments when we thought it was getting closer but it didn't happen, so we were quite traumatised by disappointments," he said.

"We talk about art theft, but it's mostly art kidnapping, because they never really want to keep it. The ominous collector who puts it in storage or in a basement, they don't exist, because you want to show things off."

The frameless painting, which is understood to have several scratches visible after being stored in suboptimal conditions, is at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam for expert analysis and restoration.

Senior researcher Teio Meedendorp cannot wait to see it. "It's one of the earlier paintings from 1884, when for two months he returned home to his parents in Brabant," he said. "This is one of the first paintings he did, a beautiful sight of the gardens behind the parsonage. Even though this early period is often described as being smoky and dark, it already shows his talent as a colourist."

He added that the painting had a secret too. "There's this figure in the garden with a spectral-like appearance. You might be tempted to read it as a sign that he was developing a love affair with his neighbour, that she might have been walking in the garden. It's another mystery."

Seeing faces everywhere? Then maybe you've just had a baby

Nicola Davis
Science correspondent

Whether it's seeing Jesus in burnt toast, a goofy grin in the grooves of a cheese grater, or simply the man in the moon, humans have long perceived faces in unlikely places.

Now researchers in Australia say the tendency may not stay constant in adults' lives, suggesting instead that it appears to be enhanced in women who have just given birth.

The scientists suggest the finding could be down to postpartum women having higher levels of oxytocin, colloquially referred to as the "love" or "trust" hormone because of its role in social bonding.

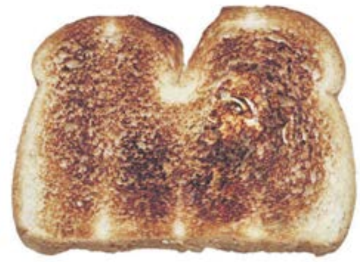
"These data, collected online, suggest that our sensitivity to face-like patterns is not fixed and may change throughout adulthood," the team explained.

Writing in the journal Biology Letters, researchers from the University of Queensland and the University of the Sunshine Coast, describe how they set out to examine whether the propensity to see faces in inanimate objects – a phenomenon known as face pareidolia – changes during life.

The researchers used an online platform to recruit women, with participants asked if they were pregnant or had just given birth – the latter being a period when oxytocin levels are generally increased.

The women were each shown 320 images in a random order online and asked to rate on an 11-point scale how easily they could see a face. While 32 of the images were of human faces, 256 were of inanimate objects with patterns that could be said to resemble a face, and 32 depicted inanimate objects with no such facial patterns.

The team then gathered data from 84 pregnant women, 79 women who had given birth in the past year, and 216 women who did not report being pregnant or having recently had a baby. The results revealed that all participants easily recognised the images of human faces, and found it difficult to see faces in the 32 images of inanimate objects lacking facial patterns.



▲ *Some people are more likely to see Jesus's face on this slice of toast*

However, women who had recently had a baby reported being able to see the 256 illusionary faces more easily than the pregnant women.

The team say the results suggest sensitivity to perceiving faces is not stable throughout adulthood and changes during early parenthood, possibly to increase social bonding, adding this might be driven by higher levels of oxytocin.

But, they note, since oxytocin levels were not measured in participants it was possible the results could be explained by other differences, such as levels of anxiety or stress.

‘There was plenty of warning’: anger over floods that have washed away whole neighbourhoods





◀ Bodies are lined up yesterday after the flooding that hit Derna. Below, the devastated city, where thousands of people have been displaced
PHOTOGRAPHS: REUTERS/AP

Continued from page 1

minister of civil aviation, said many of the dead remained where the water left them: “Bodies are lying everywhere - in the sea, in the valleys, under the buildings,” he told Reuters by phone after a visit to the city.

“I am not exaggerating when I say that 25% of the city has disappeared. Many, many buildings have collapsed.”

Video footage circulating on social media showed people pleading for help and screaming as muddy water engulfed their homes. Other video captured torrents sweeping away cars as streets turned into rivers.

Sondos Shuwaib, a local blogger, said she was in her home when she was suddenly torn away by the flood water. In a harrowing account of the disaster posted online, she described seeing children and babies caught in the current. “There were corpses next to me, and corpses above me, and corpses beneath me,” she wrote.

Shuwaib eventually washed up in shallow waters and was taken to hospital. “I am not able to comprehend what happened … sometimes I thank God for my survival - but when I remember that my family is missing [and] I wish I had died with them.”

The Norwegian Refugee Council said tens of thousands of people had been displaced. “Our team in Libya is reporting a disastrous situation for some of the most impoverished communities along the north coast,” it said. “Entire villages have been overwhelmed by the floods and the death toll continues to rise.”

Desperate citizens were appealing on social media for information about missing relatives. Many were angry at the slow pace of the relief effort, and of local authorities failure to warn that the dams were at risk of bursting.

Engineers had previously issued generalised warnings about the risk of the dams bursting and the urgent need to strengthen their defences.

Anas El-Gomati, founder of the Libya-based Sadeq thinktank, said a political inquest would be necessary. “North Africa is not immune to climate change, but this is also about corruption and incompetence. In Morocco perhaps you had seconds or minutes when the tectonic plates moved, but here in Libya there was plenty of warning about this hurricane … yet there was no evacuation of Derna - and now a quarter of the city’s population are under water.”

A 2022 report in an academic journal had warned that if a flood equivalent to one in 1959 was repeated, it would be “likely to cause one of the two dams to collapse, making the residents of the valley and the city of Derna vulnerable due to a high risk of flooding”.

Oil-rich Libya has been riven by political infighting, corruption and external interference since a 2011 uprising that toppled and later led to the death of the longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi. Attempts stretching back a decade to form a unified functioning government have failed, and instead two rival governments backed by militias are based in Tripoli in the west and Tobruk in the east.

Investment in roads and public services has dwindled and there has been minimal regulation of private building.

Derna was for several years controlled by Islamist militant groups until it was captured in 2019 by Gen Khalifa Haftar, the warlord in charge of an army in the east.

Since then, the eastern government has been suspicious of the city and sidelined its residents, said Jalel Harchaoui, an associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute for defence and security studies.

An emergency medical supply plane carrying 14 tonnes of medication, equipment and body bags - plus 87 medical and paramedic personnel - was heading to Benghazi to support the areas affected by the flood, the head of the Tripoli-based Government of National Unity, Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh, said yesterday.

The flooding led to a complete break in communications and cut off internet access in Derna. Entire neighbourhoods by the bank of a swollen river were washed away.

One resident, Hudhayfah al-Hasadi, told Al-Hurra TV channel: “The depths of some of the valleys in which water collects reach about 400 metres. Therefore, when the dam collapsed, the water was released like an atomic bomb, and eight bridges and residential buildings collapsed.”

A spokesperson for the Libyan Emergency Authority, Osama Ali, said: “All the water headed to an area near Derna, which is a mountainous coastal area … houses in the valleys that were on the flood line were swept away. Weather conditions were not studied well, sea water levels, rainfall and wind speed, and there was no evacuation of families who could be in the path of the storm.”

There were conflicting reports as to whether requests had been made to evacuate the city at the weekend, and if so why the plan was rejected.

Storm Daniel Questions over effect of climate breakdown

Damien Gayle
Environment reporter

After nearly a week of battering one country after another in a westward arc across the Mediterranean, Storm Daniel has caused unprecedented floods in Libya that burst dams protecting the port city of Derna.

Now questions are being asked about how the storm had such an immense impact, and whether it was intensified by the change in Mediterranean weather patterns as a result of climate breakdown.

For months this summer, the region had sweltered under an unprecedented heatwave. Scientists say that the heatwave raised sea surface temperatures, which could have encouraged the formation of a Mediterranean tropical-like cyclone, or “medicane”.

“While no formal attribution of the role of climate change in making Storm Daniel more intense has been conducted yet, it is safe to say that the Mediterranean sea surface temperatures have been considerably above average throughout summer,” said Dr Karsten Haustein, a climate scientist at Leipzig University.

“This is certainly true for the region where Storm Daniel could form and wreak havoc over Greece and now Libya … The warmer water does not only fuel those storms in terms of rainfall intensity, it also makes them more ferocious.”

But the storm itself was not wholly to blame for the destruction wreaked on Derna, where infrastructure, including the burst dams, was already in a parlous state, according to experts.

More than a decade after Libya’s cities were bombarded by Nato navies and warplanes supporting a revolt against Muammar Gaddafi, its former longtime ruler, the oil-rich country remains a shadow of the formerly prosperous and regionally significant nation it was. It suffered from a second civil war in 2014, and the 2020 ceasefire has not brought order.

Like many poorer countries, Libya simply was not ready for the extreme weather that Storm Daniel brought.

“It is important to recognise that the storm itself is not the single cause of the loss of life,” said Dr Kevin Collins, a senior lecturer on environment and systems at the Open University.

“It is also partly a function of Libya’s limited ability to forecast weather impacts; limited warning and evacuation systems; and planning and design standards for infrastructure and cities.

“As our climate changes, understanding, planning for and adapting to these more extreme types of events needs to be done by individuals, businesses, and communities in all countries.”

> *‘The warmer water fuels those storms and makes them more ferocious’*
>
> **Dr Karsten Haustein**
> *Climate scientist*

Lizzie Kendon, a professor of climate science at the University of Bristol Cabot Institute for the Environment, said: “We expect the intensity of heavy rainfall to increase as the world warms.

“This will not be realised as a smooth trend, and we should expect the occurrence of extreme events unprecedented in the observational record.

“Storm Daniel is illustrative of the type of devastating flooding event we may expect increasingly in the future, but such events can occur just due to the natural variability of the climate - as they did in the past.

“Therefore, care is needed before linking any specific extreme event to climate change.”

Judicial review
Protester sues police over coronation arrest
Page 13

The chic of it
Scents, suits – but Coco is the real star
Page 15





Kate through the gate The Princess of Wales on a visit to HMP High Down in Surrey yesterday to learn about how the Forward Trust charity, of which she is patron, is supporting those in the criminal justice system to manage and recover from their addictions and move forward to build a more positive future after their release from their time in custody.

PHOTOGRAPH: JONATHAN BRADY/PA

May backs Martha's rule giving right to second medical opinion

Tom Ambrose

Theresa May has backed the campaign for Martha's rule in England to make it easier for patients and their families to get a second medical opinion when they believe their concerns are not being taken seriously by medical staff.

The former prime minister said that "more needs to be done" and that such a move "might see fewer deaths".

"It is so good that Martha's mother, Merope, is actually out there campaigning for something to be done about this," she told the BBC's Political Thinking with Nick Robinson podcast. "I wish she wasn't in the position of having to do that.

"But she is putting herself forward and I think she's absolutely right. More needs to be done to ensure that in those circumstances, families have a means of raising the alarm."

Martha, who would have been 16 on Monday, died in 2021 after developing sepsis while under the care of King's College hospital NHS foundation trust in south London.

An inquest heard there were several opportunities to refer Martha to intensive care but this did not happen. The trust has since apologised for mistakes in Martha's care.

Martha's mother, Merope Mills – a senior editor at the Guardian – and her husband, Paul Laity, are calling for Martha's rule to be put in place so that patients, families and care workers will be able to easily request a second opinion from a senior doctor in the same hospital in the event of a suspected deterioration or serious concern.

May added: "This is something that needs to be generally available. And I absolutely agree with Martha's mother. It can't include questionnaires for the families. It has to be clear, everybody has to know about it and it has to be a swift process. And if that can be put in place, I know the government's looking at it.

"It's got to be clear. It's got to be understandable and it's got to be swift. And then we might see fewer deaths."

A coroner ruled last year the 13-year-old would most probably have survived if doctors had identified the warning signs and transferred her to intensive care earlier.

Calls for Martha's rule to be introduced has already received the backing of Labour and government ministers are understood to be considering a law.

Steve Barclay, the health secretary, said a similar measure enforced in Australia had been shown to have saved lives. He said officials had been tasked with looking into whether such initiatives could "improve patient safety here in the UK".

Ryan's rule, which was introduced in Queensland, was named after Ryan Saunders, who died in 2007 from an undiagnosed streptococcal infection that led to toxic shock syndrome. When Ryan's parents were worried he was getting worse, they did not feel their concerns were acted on in time.

Martha was being looked after at King's after sustaining a pancreatic injury following a fall from her bike while on a family holiday in Wales. The trust said clinical improvements had been made after Martha's death.

Merope Mills said: "Even if you were to give the doctors the benefit of the doubt and say they were trying not to worry us, the result is that they did not give us any agency in demanding the correct treatment for our daughter."

King's is a specialist national referral centre for children with pancreatic problems. A spokesperson at King's said the trust remained "deeply sorry that we failed Martha when she needed us most".



▲ *Martha Mills died in 2021 after developing sepsis while in hospital*

Disposable vape ban 'could flood market with illegal products'

Sarah Marsh

A proposed ban on single-use vapes has been welcomed by councils and leading doctors, amid concern it could lead to a "flood" of illegal products entering the UK market.

Ministers are reportedly preparing to stop the sale of disposable e-cigarettes given growing fears over their environmental impact and the health risks they pose to the large number of teenage users. An announcement is expected soon.

David Fothergill, chair of the Local Government Association's community wellbeing board, said its members were "very pleased" about a possible ban: "Single-use vapes blight our streets as litter, are a hazard in our bin lorries, are expensive and difficult to deal with in our recycling centres … [They] are an inherently unsustainable product."

Steve Turner, registrar for the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, said medics were "really worried" about youth vaping, which was an "effective entry into nicotine addiction and smoking". He said the situation was "a public health disaster". E-cigarettes should at least be concealed in shops and "sold under the same conditions that all other nicotine products are", he said.

But Scott Butler, executive director at the environmental charity Material Focus, said a ban could lead to "hard to control illegal sales and an established illegal vape market". He said: "If the legitimate industry is banned, then there will be no mechanism to deal with all the operational challenges and costs of illegally sold vapes which have the same challenges."

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said: "We are concerned about the rise in youth vaping … that is why we launched a call for evidence to identify opportunities to reduce the number of children accessing and using vaping products – and explore where the government can go further. We will set out our response in due course."



▲ *Experts are concerned e-cigarettes are damaging teenagers' health*



◀ Rishi Sunak in cabinet yesterday. Ministers are considering excluding public sector bonuses from pension calculations

PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON WALKER/NO 10

Treasury targets pensions triple lock for one-off cut to save £1bn

Continued *from page 1*

triple lock remained in place for now, in the long-term it was "not sustainable". He refused to confirm that average earnings including bonuses would be used under the triple-lock formula.

He told BBC Radio 4's The World At One: "There clearly is a difference if you take into account the non-consolidated elements of pay in recent times, but these are all decisions that I have to take with the chancellor as part of a very clear process, a statutory process actually, that I go through in the autumn."

In remarks that have offered hope to some Tories that there could be a basis for cross-party talks on the issue, Labour's deputy leader, Angela Rayner, refused to commit her party to the policy at the TUC conference in Liverpool.

"We will have to see where we are when we get to a general election and we see the finances," she told the BBC. A Labour spokesperson later said that its position remained one of urging the government to stick to its commitment of maintaining the lock.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) said annual growth in regular pay from May to July, excluding bonuses, was 7.8%, but one-off payments in the NHS and civil service helped push the overall average including bonuses to 8.5%.

Whitehall sources pointed out that the exceptional nature of the one-off payments was demonstrated by an annual average increase in public sector bonuses of more than £1,400. The figures could still be revised next month when final figures for the May to July period are published. An 8.5% rise in the full new state pension could take it from about £204 a week to £221, or from about £10,600 to about £11,502 annually. But a smaller rise of 7.8% would instead take it from about £204 a week to about £220, or about £11,427 annually.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) said the figures meant the state pension - to be confirmed by the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, at next month's spending review - would cost £2bn more than budgeted in 2024-25, taking the annual bill close to £140bn for the UK's 12 million pensioners.

The former Conservative leader William Hague said it was time to ditch the triple lock, suggesting the cost was "unsustainable" and that the increases were "not something that can go on for ever" without large tax rises or big reductions in benefits for working age families. He cited an IFS report that found maintaining the triple lock could add as much as £45bn a year to the welfare bill by 2050, putting "insurmountable pressure" on the government to increase the minimum retirement age.

"A runaway train is a fair analogy because we don't know where it will end up, or at what speed; it's nearly going too fast already for the train drivers to slow it down, but if they don't it will end in disaster," he wrote in an article for the Times.

"The train drivers [Sunak and Keir Starmer] understand this. Neither can afford to commit electoral suicide by being alone in suggesting that some change is needed, even though that is obvious. Sometimes in politics you have to help each other a bit."

Rupert Harrison, who sits on the government's economic advisory council, said on X, formerly known as Twitter: "It's time for an independent review with cross-party support & concluding after the next election." After a muted political responses to the proposal, he added: "Today suggests there may well be political space for this."

A risky move this close to election

Larry Elliott

It may simply be an attempt to test the political water but the government is making it known that serious consideration is being given to tinkering with the triple lock formula used to up-rate the state pension in April this year.

Introduced after the 2010 election by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, the triple lock ensures pensioners receive an annual increase in line with whichever is highest - average earnings, inflation or 2.5%.

The inflation element of the triple lock is determined by the annual rate for September, which will be released in October. Currently, that seems likely to be about 7%.

Annual earnings are calculated over a different period - the three months from May to July, and include regular pay and bonuses. This year, the figure for total pay has been distorted by one-off payments to NHS staff and civil servants in June and July.

According to the Office for National Statistics these exceptional payments led to a 1411.5% annual increase in bonus payments to the public sector in the three months to July. They also pushed up the annual increase in earnings for the whole economy from 8.4% to 8.5%. The ONS points out that the May to July earnings figures are provisional and may be revised next month. Even so, it looks certain pensions next April will be uprated with earnings, not inflation.

Whitehall is now considering tweaking the earnings figure so it's based either on regular pay - running at 7.8% - or on a measure of total pay not distorted by the civil service and NHS payouts. That would cut the size of next year's pension rise by between 0.5 and 0.7 percentage points and save the Treasury up to £1bn.

The full state pension is now £203.85 a week and would rise to £221.18 were it to be increased with earnings growth of 8.5%. Based on earnings growth of 7.8% it would rise to £219.75 a week.

There is a precedent. Earnings surged as businesses reopened after Covid lockdowns and the government temporarily suspended the triple lock. But in the context of total public spending well in excess of £1tn a year, the saving would be modest and the three ministers taking the final decision - Rishi Sunak, Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, and Mel Stride, work and pensions secretary - may conclude the wrath of pensioners, this close to a general election, is not worth it.

£1bn

Maximum sum the Treasury saves with regard to pensions if earnings figures are based only on regular pay

Post-Brexit thaw brings UK closer to deal to cooperate with EU border force

Lisa O'Carroll
Brussels correspondent

Rishi Sunak is on the verge of securing an agreement for cooperation between the UK and the EU's border protection agency, Frontex, in a further sign of thawing post-Brexit relations.

The deal is expected to mirror other agreements Frontex has with "third country" states, including one with Albania, which agreed to renew its 2019 accord.

It would lead to the sharing of intelligence of migration trends but would not address the small boats crisis involving people crossing the Channel by irregular means.

Sources say the pact will be discussed next week by the Frontex management board, which meets about six times a year. The deal could be signed this month.

A spokesperson for Sunak said the text of a deal had not yet been agreed. "Obviously we hope to achieve a deal that works for us and our European neighbours," the spokesperson said.

A Frontex agreement, albeit limited in scope, would be the third move by Sunak as PM to repair practical relations between the EU and the UK.

In February he and the European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, came to an agreement to resolve the row over the post-Brexit trading arrangements in Northern Ireland, with significant compromises by Brussels. The Windsor agreement cleared the way for the UK's return to the €85bn (£73bn) Horizon science research programme which was agreed last week - pleasing the science and academic communities.

Relations between Sunak and Von der Leyen are said to be flourishing and sources said the Horizon deal underlined a welcome pragmatism from Downing Street.

Government sources said they believed the normalisation of relations would "unlock" the Frontex deal but emphasised there was nothing in the agreement that would address the small boats crisis or Suella Braverman's desire to return irregular migrants to mainland Europe.

There are also reservations at the EU about Braverman's wish to leave the European convention on human rights, which could put at risk the chapter on policing in the 2020 trade and cooperation agreement.

If the UK left the ECHR, the EU could pull the plug on the policing chapter. That would mean the end of the sharing of DNA data, criminal records and fingerprint databases.

The Lords' justice and home affairs committee has already written to Braverman to express concern that the new illegal migration legislation could lead to the "termination and/or suspension" of the security cooperation elements of the trade deal.



▼ *Campaigners in Brighton protest over untreated sewage being dumped in the sea from storm overflows*
PHOTOGRAPH: PETER FLUDE/THE GUARDIAN

Government and regulators 'may have broken law over raw sewage discharges'

Sandra Laville
Environment correspondent

The government and regulators may have broken the law by failing to stem raw sewage dumping into rivers by water companies in England, the independent environmental watchdog has said.

The Office for Environmental Protection (OEP), which was set up after Brexit to replace the enforcement powers of the European Commission, said an investigation suggested the government, the Environment Agency (EA) and Ofwat may be allowing raw sewage to be discharged by water companies more frequently than the law permits.

The findings point the finger at ministers for the first time for not stopping raw sewage discharges into rivers and seas. Such discharges are allowed only in exceptional circumstances.

The OEP was called in to investigate by the charity WildFish, which said it believed regulators were failing in their duty to enforce the law.

Yesterday, the OEP said: "It appears that the public authorities may have interpreted the law differently, permitting such discharges to occur more often." The OEP said the EA failures related to the way it set permit conditions for raw sewage releases and in the way it enforced the conditions on the permits. Ofwat, the industry's financial regulator, had potentially failed to properly use its powers to make enforcement orders where sewerage companies had failed to treat sewage.

The watchdog said the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs had possible failures relating to its duty to make enforcement orders where sewerage companies fail to comply with the law to deal effectively with sewage.

The failures are all related to duties in the urban wastewater treatment laws, which derive from EU law.

The UK government was in 2012 found to be in breach of these laws by the European court over raw sewage discharges.

The OEP, which has far fewer enforcement powers than the European Commission, has given the regulators two months to respond.

Helen Venn, the OEP's chief regulatory officer, said: "The core of the issue is that where we interpret the law to mean that untreated sewage discharges should generally be allowed only in exceptional circumstances, such as during unusually heavy rainfall, it appears that the public authorities may have interpreted the law differently, permitting such discharges to occur more often.

"This then has consequences for the regulatory activity that follows. The guidance provided by government to regulators … possibly allow untreated sewage discharges to occur more regularly than intended by the law without risk of sanction."

A government spokesperson said: "The volume of sewage discharged is completely unacceptable. While we do not agree with the OEP's initial interpretations, which cover points of law spanning over two decades, we will continue to work constructively with the OEP on this issue."

Steve Reed, the shadow environment secretary, said: "Nothing represents 13 years of Conservative failure more graphically than the sight of stinking, toxic sewage pouring into our rivers, lakes, and seas. Rishi Sunak wouldn't want raw sewage in his private swimming pool, yet he's happy to let human excrement pollute our waterways.

"This scandal is the Conservatives' fault. They cut back enforcement and monitoring of the water companies releasing this filth, and are now failing to prosecute them when they are blatantly breaking the law."

The OEP investigated storm overflows along the water network, rather than in treatment plants run by the water companies. Storm overflows in treatment plants run by six water companies are already at the centre of an investigation by Ofwat and the EA into suspected widespread illegal dumping of sewage.

Venn said the OEP would consider the responses of the regulators before deciding on future action. This could involve issuing a decision notice and possible referral to the high court.

Pesticide regulation
UK 'toxic poster child'

The UK has failed to ban 36 pesticides that are not allowed in the EU, as campaigners say it is becoming the "toxic poster child of Europe". Though ministers promised the UK would not water down EU-derived environmental standards after Brexit, it is failing to phase out harmful pesticides at the same rate as the EU, according to Pesticide Action Network (PAN).

Thirteen of the 36 chemicals are considered highly hazardous under UN definitions. Four of these are highly toxic to bees, one contaminates water and one is highly toxic to aquatic organisms.

Thirty of the 36 were allowed in the EU when the UK left on 31 January 2020 but have since been banned, and six have since been approved by the UK but not the EU.

Nick Mole, from PAN UK, said: "The UK is becoming the toxic poster child of Europe. The government has repeatedly promised that our environmental standards won't slip post-Brexit … [but] we're seeing our standards fall far behind those of the EU."

Twelve of the chemicals have been classified as carcinogens and nine have been found to be endocrine disruptors, which interfere with hormones.

A Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs spokesperson said: "Very strict regulation only permits the sale and use of pesticides where scientific assessment clearly shows they will not harm people or pose unacceptable risks to the environment."
Helena Horton

Poll of girls and young women shows happiness at 15-year low

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

Happiness among girls and young women has hit its lowest level in 15 years, according to "devastating" polling for Girlguiding that shows nine out of 10 seven- to 21-year-olds are now worried or anxious.

In figures that Angela Salt, the movement's chief executive, said showed "girls and young women have been let down", only 17% of girls aged seven to 21 now feel very happy, compared with 40% in 2009.

The sharpest drop in happiness has been among seven- to 10-year-olds. Only 28% say they are happy, compared with well over half in 2009.

There has also been a big rise in anger among 11- to 21-year-olds that "adults have damaged the environment" and the children's generation will "have to deal with it". One girl told the researchers: "I am scared our world will fall into ruins and we won't be able to do anything about it."

There were signs of hope, though. More girls are speaking out and campaigning on issues they care about, protest marching is up, and more feel part of their communities.

But in the survey of 2,614 girls and young women, many described how negative feelings about body image, problems online and shrinking aspirations were eroding their wellbeing.

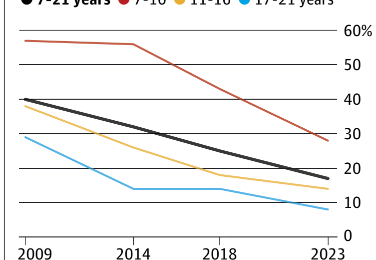
"They're facing persistent issues that aren't going away and it's having a negative impact on their lives," said Salt. "Girls are feeling pressures and experiencing challenges from all angles, from harm online to appearance and sexual harassment.

"Not only are girls worried about their futures and the increased cost of living, but they're experiencing unrealistic pressures and negative behaviours because they are girls."

Despite campaigns to change the way female body image is depicted, two-thirds "sometimes feel ashamed of the way I look because I'm not like girls and women in the media".

The charity Childline said the results "reinforce how essential the upcoming online safety bill will be in ensuring girls can use social media platforms without the fear of suffering sexism and abuse".

Only 17% of girls and young women said they feel very happy
% of respondents saying they were very happy
● **7-21 years** ● 7-10 ● 11-16 ● 17-21 years



Source: Girlguiding


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Popular groceries at risk from climate change, charity warns

Damien Gayle

More than a fifth of UK shoppers' favourite grocery items are at risk from climate breakdown, a charity has warned.

Consumers could face shortages of bananas, grapes, avocados, cashews, cocoa, peas, canned tuna and tea in coming years, as the countries they come from are hit by changing weather patterns as a result of CO_2 emissions, Christian Aid has said.

Of the 25 biggest food exporters to the UK, eight - Brazil, South Africa, India, Vietnam, Peru, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya - faced high climate vulnerability, according to research by the charity. It found 22% of the items in a typical British grocery shop were at risk. Some impacts have been seen already. UK supplies of tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, peppers and citrus fruits ground to a halt earlier this year as drought hit parts of Spain and Morocco.

Yadira Lemus's family has been farming coffee in the hills of Honduras for generations, with their farmland almost perfect for the crop. "We would plant coffee and it produced almost by itself," she said.

But old certainties can no longer be relied on. "It is harder to predict the weather," Lemus told researchers. "Before we could say which is winter or summer, and when we can plant. Not any more."

Lemus, who is part of a women's group working with the support of Christian Aid partners to implement climate adaptation projects, said the difficulties she and fellow coffee cultivators were facing were "obviously related to climate change".

"Who was going to predict that we were going to have the storms and hurricanes we had last year. Now you see there is a lack of rain. We are more vulnerable to these types of changes," she said.

Researchers warn that further warming would mean more harvest-destroying extreme weather events, leaving consumers facing further shortages and long-term prices rises.

In March, annual food price inflation in the UK reached a record high of 19% - the second highest figure in the G7, after Germany.

"The UK may be an island but in an ever more interconnected world we cannot escape the damage caused by climate change," said Patrick Watt, chief executive of Christian Aid.

"Our record on carbon emissions has helped cause the climate crisis. Farmers in some of the world's poorest countries are now struggling to cope with droughts, storms and rising temperatures.

"The climate crisis is increasingly disrupting the supply chains of the food in British shopping baskets and risks adding to the cost of living crisis.

"The case for action has never been clearer. The UK government must work with others to provide the financial support needed to help vulnerable communities adapt to a fast-changing climate."

Alexander Carnwath, head of public affairs at the Fairtrade Foundation, said smallholder farmers in low-income countries were being hit hardest. "This is an important and timely report from Christian Aid, drawing the connection between the threat that climate change poses to the livelihoods of farmers and the food we eat in the UK."



Chess moves The Scottish Ballet dancers Ishan Mahabir-Stokes and Claire Souet rehearse in Kelvingrove art gallery in Glasgow to promote the UK premiere of Schachmatt (Checkmate!) by the Spanish choreographer Cayetano Soto.

PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF J MITCHELL / GETTY IMAGES

War-torn Yemen agrees looted stones can stay in UK for safety

Harriet Sherwood
Arts and culture correspondent

In a historic agreement with Yemen, the Victoria and Albert Museum is to look after four ancient carved funerary stones that were found by police in a shop in east London.

The stelae, which date from the second half of the first millennium BC, come from necropolises that have been looted in recent years.

The V&A will care for, research and conserve the stelae on a temporary basis before they are returned to Yemen, which is in the grip of civil war, when it is safe to do so. In the meantime they will go on show as part of a display on Culture in Crisis at the V&A East Storehouse in Hackney, east London, from 2025.

There have been growing demands on cultural institutions in Britain and elsewhere to return artefacts that were looted. Particular focus has been on the Parthenon marbles and Benin bronzes at the British Museum.

The Yemeni stones were discovered by an archaeology enthusiast in an interior design shop in east London and recovered by the Metropolitan police's art and antiques unit, which investigates art theft and trafficking.

Yesterday the agreement was signed by Tristram Hunt, the V&A's director, and Yassin Saeed Noman Ahmed, the ambassador for Yemen.

The stelae were "incredible", said Hunt. "This is a historic agreement that will give the public the chance to appreciate these exceptional examples of Yemeni culture and creativity, before the objects are repatriated,



The four ancient funerary stelae

and shine a light on how the V&A's Culture in Crisis programme helps curtail the illegal trade of looted objects and the preservation of cultural heritage worldwide."

Commander Stephen Clayman of the Met said: "The art and antiques unit seized these four stelae from a shop in London following information received from a concerned member of the public. The investigation established they are ancient archaeological artefacts from Yemen, and came from necropoli that have been subjected to looting.

"When the seller was given this information, they made the generous decision to disclaim them, and asked for them to be returned to Yemen."

The stones are on the International Council of Museums' emergency red list of cultural objects at risk.

ID law could bar hundreds of thousands of voters, says watchdog

Peter Walker
Deputy political editor

Hundreds of thousands of people could be excluded from voting in a UK general election because of voter ID laws, the government's election watchdog has said.

The laws could have a disproportionate effect on poorer people, those with disabilities and people from minority ethnic backgrounds, the Electoral Commission warned.

It said ministers should take urgent action to alleviate these impacts, including drawing up a wider list of documents that people can show to vote and allowing people without ID to have someone else vouch for their identity.

Such a damning verdict from the official body for elections risks considerable embarrassment for ministers, who have repeatedly refused to engage with similar concerns from charities and other groups about the impact of voter ID.

In its own statement about the report, the Department for Levelling Up - which has responsibility for elections - failed to mention any criticism and said the introduction of voter ID had been "very encouraging".

The commission's report, based on a detailed study of the May local elections in England, the first mass use of voter ID in the UK outside Northern Ireland, said the disfranchising effect of the law was likely to be proportionately greater in a general election.

Among people who did not vote in May, 4% said this was because of voter ID. If this figure went up to 5%, it could mean about 800,000 people staying away from the polls at a general election.

The study additionally found a disproportionate impact on certain demographic groups. In May, there tended to be a higher proportion of people turned away for lacking ID in more deprived areas. The survey of people who did not vote found that 3% overall said this was because they lacked the required ID, but this rose to 8% for those who were unemployed and 9% for people with a significant disability.

Similarly, young voters or those from minority ethnic backgrounds were five times as likely as the overall average to say they were unable to vote because they took the wrong ID to a polling station.

Ministers have faced significant criticism over the limited number of acceptable forms of ID, which include a series of documents issued to older people but almost none issued to younger ones, such as travel passes and student documents.

Rishi Sunak's official spokesperson said the government would "consider the findings" from the report, adding: "We have said that we would learn any lessons from this initial rollout."

Rayner pledges zero-hours ban and repeal of strike laws

Rowena Mason
Whitehall editor

Angela Rayner has given a "cast iron guarantee" that Labour would bring in a new bill to ban zero-hours contracts and repeal anti-strike laws within 100 days of a new government.

The deputy Labour leader, who leads for the party on workers' rights, told the annual conference of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) that it was putting improving the lives of workers at its core, and would bring in a "proper living wage" to raise pay.

Her pledges came after Unite, a major Labour donor and one of the biggest unions, previously expressed fears some commitments to workers' rights were being watered down.

But speaking in Liverpool, Rayner said she came to the conference "with one message: the next Labour government will build an economy that works for working people, with a new deal for working people". She said Labour's commitments for the first 100 days after taking office included banning zero-hours contracts, ending blacklisting, and repealing two "spiteful and bitter" anti-union laws from 2016 and this year.

The shadow deputy prime minister also mentioned strengthening sick pay, fair pay agreements in social care, giving trade unions access to workplaces and ending the gender pay gap.

"Work will finally pay, rights will be properly enforced, and crucially it will strengthen the role of trade unions in our society," she said.

"This is vital, because the new deal wasn't sent down on some tablet by politicians, it was developed in collaboration with you - the trade union movement - and it will be delivered with you. Key to this, we will update trade union laws to make them fit for the 21st century, because for too long these have failed to keep pace with the hard reality on the ground."

Rayner gave the keynote speech after several addresses to the TUC in previous years by Keir Starmer, who attended a dinner of union leaders in Liverpool on Monday night. Sources said he was well received, although Unite's general secretary, Sharon Graham, did not attend.

Rayner's speech was strongly welcomed by the TUC, the organising body for trade unions, which said Labour's offer would be transformative and mark the biggest upgrade in workers' rights in a generation, in contrast to "the Tories' dire record on workers' rights and pay".

Paul Nowak, the TUC's general secretary, said the Conservatives had "presided over an explosion in insecure work and the longest pay squeeze in modern history. And they are now launching a full-scale attack on the right to strike."

Sharon Graham, the general secretary of Unite, said she was in no doubt that the country "clearly would be better off with a Labour government". But she added: "That said, as the general secretary of Unite, my job is to fight for workers and ensure Labour commits to making the lives of working people better."

The Conservatives sought to portray Rayner's speech as a sign that Labour would be too influenced by trade unions in government.

Greg Hands, the party chair, said it showed the "mask has slipped".

He said: "Despite Keir Starmer's short-term promises to be pro-business, his deputy leader is committing to Labour's union paymasters that they will have more control over Britain's economy."



▼ *A National Education Union rally in Birmingham. Angela Rayner says Labour will revoke anti-union laws*
PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE KEMP/IN PICTURES/GETTY

Antisemitism
Privacy case over leaked file dropped

Haroon Siddique
Pippa Crerar
Aletha Adu

Nine people who were suing the Labour party after they were named as complainants in a leaked report over alleged antisemitism have dropped their case.

The nine were suing Labour for failure to protect their data and invasion of privacy, after they were identified as having made complaints about antisemitism in an 860-page document that claimed factional hostility towards Jeremy Corbyn contributed to the party's ineffective handling of such complaints.

The discontinuation of the case was revealed in documents lodged at the high court on Monday. It was unclear whether an out of court settlement had been reached.

In a linked case, Labour is suing five former staff that it accused of leaking the internal report. The cases were expected to be heard together next year and had the potential to damage the party in the run-up to the next general election.

The Guardian understands that the development does not affect the party's claim against the former staffers, who include Corbyn's former chief of staff Karie Murphy and his former director of communications Seumas Milne, although there is speculation it may prompt the party to reconsider.

It was estimated Labour could face a legal bill of £3m to £4m from fighting the cases. The party has already spent more than £500,000 as part of its lawsuit against the five former staffers.

The internal report, titled The work of the Labour party's governance and legal unit in relation to antisemitism, 2014-2019, was compiled to be submitted - although it never was - to an investigation by the equalities watchdog into antisemitism allegations within Labour.

It was leaked days after Keir Starmer became party leader, and his supporters said this was done to "smear whistleblowers" who had exposed antisemitism.

It included details of staffers' private conversations expressing hostility towards Corbyn or his close allies and bemoaning Labour's better than expected performance in the 2017 general election.

In April, seven of the nine complainants were named in a high court order, having unsuccessfully sought anonymity in the legal proceedings. They included the Labour Against Antisemitism spokesperson, Euan Philipps, and its members Emma Picken and Denny Taylor.

The other staffers being sued by Labour are Georgie Robertson, Laura Murray and Harry Hayball. All denied leaking the report, and an investigation by the Information Commissioner's Office into them decided there was insufficient evidence to prosecute.



'Time to be bolder' Eyes on the prize, but Labour urged to be less cautious

Heather Stewart
Rowena Mason

With perhaps just months to go before a general election, Keir Starmer's message to union leaders gathered for dinner in Liverpool on Monday evening was simple - as one official present put it, "eyes on the prize".

Starmer gave a laid-back after-dinner speech to the assembled general secretaries, leavened with football gags, and received a standing ovation.

"We want him to be the next prime minister, of course we were going to stand for him," said another dinner guest.

At what is likely to be the final gathering of the TUC before the UK goes to the polls, most delegates were sufficiently enthused by the prospect of chucking the Conservatives out of office to dial down their doubts about Starmer.

The majority of Labour-affiliated unions - Unison and GMB among them - fully back a package of workers' rights policies agreed at the party's recent national policy forum - believing it to be genuinely transformative.

It includes the right for unions to organise in any workplace; a ban on zero-hours contracts; and the repeal of anti-strike laws.

Angela Rayner, Starmer's deputy and the star turn in Liverpool, gave what she said was a "cast-iron guarantee" that the package would be tabled within Labour's first 100 days in office.

Just one Labour-affiliated union refused to join the love-in in Liverpool: Unite, which has shifted from being intimately entwined with Jeremy Corbyn's Labour leadership under Len McCluskey, to vehement critic under his successor, Sharon Graham.

Graham has accused Labour of rowing back on key aspects of the workers' rights package - though other union leaders pointed out that she had not attended the

▼ *Angela Rayner speaks at the TUC annual conference, likely to be the last one before the general election*
PHOTOGRAPH: KARL BLACK/ALAMY



negotiations in Nottingham in person. "If there has been any watering down, it's about 1% of the content, and we would be the first people on any government's backs if they hadn't consulted fully about changes anyway," said one union general secretary.

The GMB's general secretary, Gary Smith, called the policies "an exciting package from a government in waiting".

Although Graham avoided the dinner, several of her top lieutenants were there, showing that relations with the party have not completely crumbled.

The show of unity among the other Labour-affiliated unions came despite concerns about what some see as an excess of caution from the party leadership - including the refusal to countenance a wealth tax or reverse the two-child limit on benefits. Some would also like to see a commitment to a £15 minimum wage, and to more spending on public services - and plan to lobby Labour privately on these and other issues.

Christina McAnea, general secretary of the public sector union Unison, said, "I would like Labour to give much firmer spending commitments to protect public services. That would be a big deal to us. But I also understand to a point why they won't do that. They'll be seen as the tax and spend party of old. But nearer the election, they are going to have to come forward with some proposals so people know what the choices are."

Several details of the workers' rights package are also yet to be worked out, with debate about what banning "exploitative" zero-hour contracts means in practice, and how the new "fair pay agreement" promised for social care and potentially other sectors will work.

However, the overall mood in Liverpool was one of trade unionists holding their breath and crossing their fingers for a Starmer-led Labour government, which they hope would listen to workers after years of austerity.

Many vividly remember Ed Miliband's poll lead in 2015 before David Cameron went on to win a majority, and fret about taking any public steps that could jeopardise a Starmer victory.

Unite's behaviour therefore irritated some other trade unions, which see it as striking a deliberately provocative pose. "What do they have to do, sign it in blood?" one source said of the workers' rights policies.

The TUC, the organising body for trade unions, is not affiliated to Labour but its general secretary, Paul Nowak, put significant emphasis in his speech on Monday on urging people to "vote for working people, vote for chance, vote for the party we named for our movement: vote Labour".

"I would hope that Labour would see the value of a union voice at every level - in the workplace, at sectoral level, but also in the big strategic decisions that shape our economy," Nowak said.

One senior Labour source accused Unite of "petty" politics, in vocally criticising the workers' rights package when it delivers so much of what the movement has been asking for.

Unite is not completely isolated in its criticisms of Labour, however. Mark Serwotka of the non-affiliated PCS union said: "We're all desperate to get them gone and have a Labour government, but I think Labour have to have a vision and at the moment their priorities are all wrong.

"If your example to Britain is, we're making tough choices, and the tough choice is no wealth tax, no increase in the burden on those who afford it most, our tough choice is to keep a two-child policy in benefits - your choices are totally wrong."

And while outspoken dissent from most unions appears unlikely as a potentially decisive polling day looms after 13 years of Tory rule, it was clear in Liverpool that Starmer will continue to come under pressure over tax and spend.

Nowak, of the TUC, has repeatedly advocated a wealth tax, despite the shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, appearing to rule it out - and published polling this week showing that the idea has public support even among Tory voters. "I think it's time to be bolder, and our job as a trade union movement is to demonstrate that these ideas will be popular at the next election," he said.



▲ *Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, answers questions from local sixth formers at a Q&A session hosted by the Liverpool Echo* PHOTOGRAPH: LABOUR PARTY

Sketch
John Crace



Starmer's deputy gets to parts of the movement that he can't - and the leader knows it

First get all your ducks in a row. For much of the last three years you couldn't miss the tension at the top of the Labour party. Keir Starmer and Angela Rayner made an uneasy couple as leader and deputy. They more or less held things together in public, but behind the scenes they never really trusted one another. If they stopped short of openly trashing each other then they happily damned with faint praise. Few gave the relationship a long-term future.

But over the summer there's been a shift. Starmer and Rayner have come to realise that together they are more than the sum of their parts. That, actually, they work well together. They both have a lot to offer the other. It's partly down to realpolitik. With the election probably only a year away, now is not the time for infighting. Labour needs to show voters a united front and Starmer and Rayner had to get their acts together.

It's more than that though. Keir now regards Angela as an asset. Not just a John Prescott to his Tony Blair. But a Barbara Castle. Someone who can get to parts of the labour movement he can't.

Last year it was Starmer who got to address the Trades Union Congress congress. The old Starmer might have big-footed Rayner this time round and insisted on addressing the TUC again. You can imagine the reasons - last congress before the election, the unions need to hear from the Labour leader, make a connection. Instead the Labour leader kicked back a bit. He didn't avoid the TUC in Liverpool. He was up on Monday night having dinner with union leaders. But he was happy to let Rayner do the front-of-house gig with the speech to delegates in the hall. Give Angie a chance to shine. Oddly it would also do no harm to be slightly keeping a distance. The Tory media would go wild if he had been love-bombed by the unions. They'd be screaming socialist revolution.

Rayner did the front of house gig. A chance to shine. The Tory media would have gone wild if Keir had been love-bombed by the unions

Rayner kept it fairly short and sweet. Starting with her own backstory. Hers was a life turned round by being a member of a trade union and by New Labour's genuine efforts at levelling up. Unlike the empty levelling up promises of the current Tory government. This was a story that Starmer could never tell, not convincingly. Rayner's early struggles have been of a different order to most MPs. Both Tory and Labour.

Starmer got mentioned twice. Of course he did. Both for giving her the job and for the scale of his vision. This was a thoroughly professional operation. There'd be no opportunity for commentators to imagine any division. Labour United. Rayner said pretty much everything a TUC audience could have wanted to hear. All without committing Labour to spending anything. A new Labour government would repeal Tory anti-strike laws within the first 100 days and present a workers' deal. One good for business too. She even promised an inquiry into Orgreave. Over and beyond.

Her final words came with a veiled warning. The general election would not be easy. Labour would do its bit, now it was up to the unions to do theirs. To not make difficult demands and get behind the party. Oh, and stump up more cash. But she needn't really have bothered. The TUC was onside long before this. Come the end she got a standing ovation from the hall. The TUC loved her. And she loved them. Starmer's decision to let her make the speech was vindicated.

BP boss Looney resigns over past relationships with colleagues at firm

Alex Lawson

The chief executive of BP has resigned less than four years into his tenure after admitting that he failed to fully detail relationships with colleagues.

Bernard Looney, 53, who has spent his entire career with BP, has departed the £88bn company immediately in a surprise move.

Last night the company informed investors that Looney "did not provide details of all relationships and accepts he was obliged to make more complete disclosure".

It said Looney disclosed "a small number of historical relationships with colleagues prior to becoming CEO" during a review last year, triggered by information from an anonymous source.

At that time, no breach of the company's code of conduct was found. However, BP said its board "sought and was given assurances by Mr Looney regarding disclosure of past personal relationships, as well as his future behaviour".

Further allegations were recently made and an investigation, involving external legal counsel, is ongoing.

BP said: "Mr Looney has today informed the company that he now accepts that he was not fully transparent in his previous disclosures.

"The company has strong values and the board expects everyone at the company to behave in accordance with those values.

"All leaders in particular are expected to act as role models and to exercise good judgment in a way that earns the trust of others."

Murray Auchincloss, the company's chief financial officer, will run the business on an interim basis.

Looney was raised on a dairy farm in Ireland and joined BP in 1991 aged 21, shortly after studying electrical engineering in Dublin.

He would go on to hold roles in BP's operations in the North Sea, Vietnam and Mexico, and took on its upstream division in 2016.

He took over at the company in 2020, and quickly set out an ambition for BP to "become a net zero company by 2050 or sooner".

Looney pledged to build up the company's operations in low-carbon pursuits including renewable energy and electric vehicle charging.

However, he came under pressure from investors who wanted BP to focus on its oil and gas business and green campaigners urging the company to move more quickly away from fossil fuels.

Earlier this year, Looney faced criticism from environmental groups after scaling back its climate ambitions at the same time as announcing that annual profits more than doubled to $28bn (£23bn) in 2022 after a sharp increase in gas prices linked to the Ukraine war boosted its earnings.

Looney's departure, first reported by the Financial Times, marks a changing of the guard at Britain's two largest energy firms. Wael Sawan took over at BP rival Shell in January.

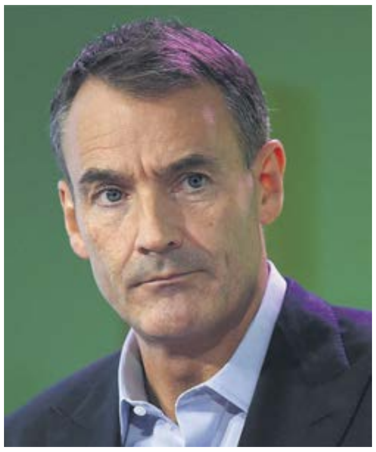
Looney received nearly £10m in salary and share awards last year, in a move that was labelled a "kick in the teeth" for consumers battling the cost of living crisis.

BP said yesterday that no decisions had been made over Looney's remuneration after his resignation.

In an unusual move for a FTSE 100 chief executive, Looney posts regular updates on Instagram, including a photograph of him in Downing Street with the former prime minister Boris Johnson and snaps from earlier in his career, including signing his job acceptance letter in 1991.

During his career at BP, the company had to navigate the devastating Deepwater Horizon scandal, the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico that threatened the business's future.





▲ *A BP petrol station near Leicester. Bernard Looney, left, had been chief executive of the firm since 2020*
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: GARY CALTON/THE OBSERVER

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Protester sues Met chief over arrest during coronation

Daniel Boffey
Chief reporter

The Metropolitan police commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley, is being sued over the arrest of a leading republican on the day of the king's coronation.

Graham Smith, the chief executive of Republic, was detained for 14 hours on 6 May. He is seeking a judicial review of the lawfulness of his arrest as well as damages and an admission of fault from Scotland Yard.

His lawyers say it is the first time that a court has had the chance to consider the "correct approach" to the exercise of powers given to the police days before the coronation of being able to arrest those suspected of "going equipped to lock on".

There were 64 arrests on the day, of which half led to no further action, including Smith's. Rowley has since conceded his detention was "unfortunate".

Smith's lawyers said he considered the coronation a "once in a generation" opportunity to voice political views about the monarchy and had made significant efforts to ensure a protest could go ahead.



▶ *Graham Smith at Westminster Abbey in March where the king was attending a Commonwealth Day service*
PHOTOGRAPH: MARK KERRISON/ IN PICTURES/GETTY

Discussions began with police four months before the event. They were given the location, the numbers expected and details of what materials, such as banners or speakers, would be brought to Trafalgar Square and elsewhere by protesters.

Despite written assurances from Scotland Yard, it is claimed the Met went on to breach Smith's right to expect to be able to demonstrate in "accordance with plans" approved by officers.

As Smith and five others helped move banners to the protest site at about 6am on 6 May they were approached by a Met officer who asked them about their intentions.

Smith explained about past assurances but they were interrupted again when the group went on to help unload a van full of banners. The van was searched; Smith and his colleagues were detained; attempts by Smith to phone the police constable with whom he had been liaising were allegedly "physically prevented".

Smith was arrested under the new offence of going equipped to lock on in relation to extendable luggage straps found in the van that the group said were for keeping the placards together as they were transported.

It is claimed by Smith's lawyers that the arresting officer did not have any reasonable grounds to suspect he was intending to commit an offence "because of his extensive communication and cooperation with … officers in respect of the protest".

They add of the straps being the justification for the arrest that "if this were the law, an individual who simply cycles to a protest and has a bike lock in their rucksack could be arrested. Further and in any event, the luggage straps … could easily be loosened or cut."

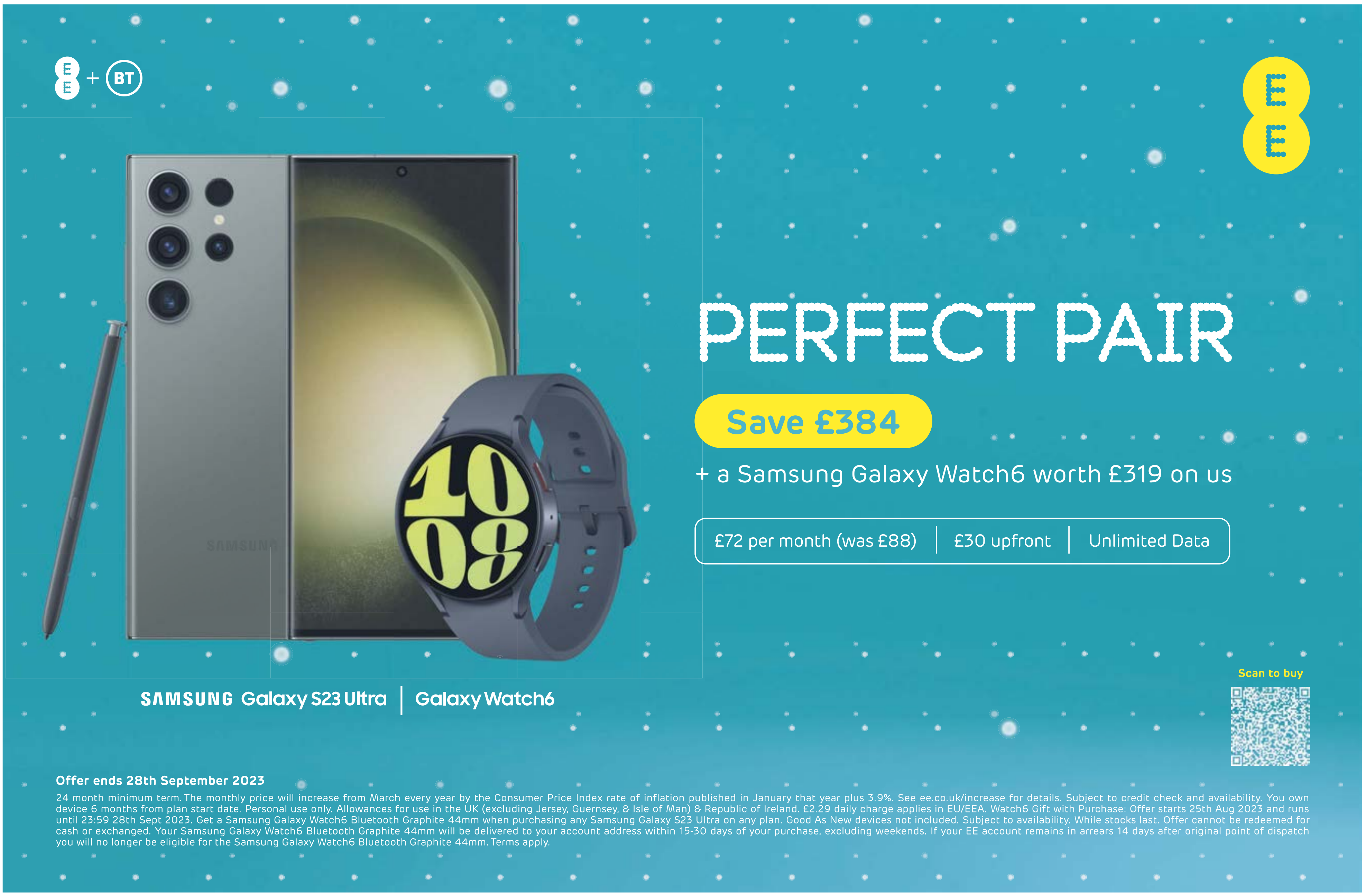
> ***'We need answers as to where the law stands on the right to protest'***
>
> **Graham Smith**
> *Republic's CEO*

In the claim, his lawyers said, Smith informed "the defendant's [Rowley's] officers of the details of where and when the protest would be carried out … the officers did not raise any objection to this planned protest and assured him that the defendant would facilitate this planned protest in accordance with articles 10 and 11 of the European convention on human rights."

The Met has called for Smith's request for a judicial review to be rejected, arguing the threshold for an arrest is a "low one" and the arresting officer had reasonable grounds.

Smith said: "The important thing is that we need answers as to where the law stands on the right to protest … I for one would certainly like to hear a full-throated apology from the Metropolitan police."

A Met spokesperson said: "We can confirm that a judicial claim has been issued. It would be inappropriate to comment on ongoing proceedings."



Spice of life

Turmeric could be the recipe for your health and wellbeing

Esther Addley

It's warm, it's yellow - and it's a nightmare to clean off the kitchen countertop. Turmeric is a mainstay of many cuisines in north Africa, the Middle East and Asia, and latterly has become a voguish addition to lattes and a prized supplement on account of its claimed health benefits.

Those properties, celebrated in ayurvedic medicine for millennia, are being confirmed by scientific studies. A paper published this week found that curcumin, a natural compound in turmeric, could be as effective as medications to treat excess stomach acid and indigestion. The yellow spice is also thought to have anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties.

We asked some experts for tips on increasing the amount of turmeric in the diet.





▲ *Turmeric with honey and cinnamon latte, and left, turmeric fried eggs with kale, harissa yoghurt and soda bread* PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY/ ISTOCKPHOTO

Scrambled eggs/paneer
Many people may know turmeric only in powdered form and use it mostly when cooking curries, but it is actually a root similar to ginger, and is commonly used in this form across India, said the chef food writer Maunika Gowardhan, who is originally from Mumbai. Although it is harder to source fresh in the UK, most Asian stores sell it, she said. "I often use it in scrambled eggs or to make paneer bhurji (scrambled paneer cheese)." She recommends grating a thumb-sized piece of fresh turmeric into scrambled eggs or paneer, "then add cumin, green chillies, fresh coriander - that's your breakfast for the weekend". Don't use too much, "as fresh turmeric is much more robust and dynamic in flavour".

Pickle
Gowardhan has a recipe for "super easy" turmeric and ginger pickle, which she says is "shards of fresh turmeric and ginger pickled with black mustard, chilli powder and mustard oil, with a pinch of sugar and salt so it's spicy-sweet". A small amount could be served with flatbread or rice, and dal - itself frequently made with turmeric.

Yoghurt or porridge
"Turmeric can throw people, because though the vibrant yellow colour is unmistakable, the flavour is a little more elusive. I'd go for bitter, but in a good way," said the Guardian columnist Felicity Cloake. Most Britons will reach first for powdered turmeric, which "tends to be used to enhance other spices rather than standing alone". But it can work well with a rich or creamy ingredient.

As well as putting the spice with scrambled eggs or tofu it can be mixed with thick yoghurt or buttery rice like kedgeree, "alongside something bolder and warmer like black pepper or ginger".

Meera Sodha, who writes the weekly New Vegan column for the Guardian's Feast magazine, suggested using it in porridge. "It's got very warm notes … so you could add it with cinnamon, a little bit of black pepper - or just use turmeric with some honey."

Warm milk
Generations of Indian children had been given warm turmeric milk when unwell, Gowardhan said. Sodha's recipe recommends using fresh or powdered turmeric with grated ginger root, a pinch of ground cardamom and honey in 500ml of any milk "in the morning for a jolt of health or last thing at night for a soothing evening drink".

Potatoes and other vegetables
As well as curries and rice dishes, Sodha often roasts vegetables with turmeric and lemon. Gowardhan suggested frying garlic, cumin and fresh green chillies in oil, adding turmeric, sugar and salt and adding to boiled potatoes, with a squeeze of lime and coriander.

Tea
But how much turmeric do we need for its health benefits? Will a warming cup of turmeric tea do any good? Jo Travers, a nutritionist, said turmeric had "lots of beneficial compounds", and while the latest study tested people taking 250mg of curcumin a day - which would be equivalent to a great deal more turmeric - there was some evidence that showed "even if you have turmeric in just culinary amounts you can still get some anti-inflammatory benefits". But Travers added: "If you're getting a turmeric tea bag from the supermarket the chances of it having any of the active compounds are quite slim."

Supplements
A great many people already take supplements. Are they right to? Since scientific studies are usually done on single ingredients "it is unclear, but that's not how our bodies evolved to eat food", said Travers. Some people might benefit from a large dose, others from a small amount. What made the most difference was a balanced diet.





The chic of it
The scent, the suit, but Coco is real star of Chanel show



Gabrielle Chanel: Fashion Manifesto
V&A, London
★★★★☆

Jess Cartner-Morley

The V&A's very enjoyable exhibition Gabrielle Chanel: Fashion Manifesto kicks off with a photograph of the designer outside one of her first boutiques. At 29, she does not yet look like Coco, queen of chic. Her long skirt is stodgy, her belted sweater a little lumpy. There is no glitter-flecked tweed, nor ropes of pearls. But the jut of her chin as she squints into the sunshine in Deauville, northern France, under the awning printed with her name, the hands clenched into boxer's fists and thrust into her pockets, makes her instantly recognisable as a force of nature.

Born into poverty in rural France in 1883 and brought up by nuns, Chanel became the architect of the modern woman's wardrobe. Her tweed suits, little black dresses and glass perfume bottles are a chic supporting cast, but there can be no overshadowing this protagonist.

We are not particularly invited to like "Mademoiselle" – a room interrogating her wartime activities points to a wily operator prepared to hedge her bets at the most fundamental of moral levels, participating in the French resistance while also working as a Nazi agent – but it would be difficult not to admire her.

There are straightforward pleasures in a show packed to the rafters with garments that modern visitors would be thrilled to wear now. Too many exhibitions of clothes can feel fussy and old-fashioned. They tend to be solemnly reverential about embroidery, breathlessly in thrall to lace-work. This one is bracingly modern. Any one of a splendid room of little black dresses – an invention that American Vogue in 1926 called "the frock that all the world will wear" – would look perfect at this week's London fashion week parties.

And reader, when I walked into the central atrium lined with 53 tweed suits – what Vogue called "the world's prettiest uniform" – I'm fairly sure my pupils dilated. I spent some time trying to play favourites between a simple jet-black two-piece from the wardrobe of Marlene Dietrich, austere but for the braided double-C gold buttons, or a pert cream set with pockets trimmed in black, chic and charming as Chanel's scent bottles.

The challenge of this exhibition – which carries a designer price tag of £24 a ticket – is that Chanel's understated elegance lacks fireworks. It cannot match the soaring emotion of Alexander McQueen's Savage Beauty, nor the sugary fantasia of the Christian Dior retrospective, with its cream cake-rich gowns on which to gorge.

But Chanel has the main character energy to carry the story. As New Yorker writer Judith Thurman says of the success of the No 5 perfume – in Coco Chanel: Unbuttoned, a BBC film to be shown on Friday to coincide with the opening of this show – "to make a perfume that is identified for a century with allure says something about the person who invented it". One of the secrets of Chanel's suits, highlighted in this show, is the gilt chain sewn into the hem of the jacket, which is there to add structure to the soft tweed silhouette by ensuring the fabric is evenly weighted around the body.

There are plenty such delicious details. A letter from a 29-year-old Queen Elizabeth II to her friend, Frederick "Boy" Browning, scrawled on Windsor Castle paper, speaks to the power of Chanel.

"As usual, you have discovered just the very thing I particularly wanted," the Queen writes, "and I want to thank you very much indeed for the birthday present of the Chanel scent."

From 16 September



▲ *Top left, Coco Chanel surrounded by sketches, pictured in 1938; above, a display of 53 tweed Chanel suits, said by Vogue to be the 'world's prettiest uniform', at the V&A's exhibition; below; a model in a Chanel suit in 1959*
PHOTOGRAPHS: ROGER SCHALL/CONDÉ NAST; GUY BELL/SHUTTERSTOCK

Ankle-tagged 'Soho grifter' shakes up NY fashion week

Edward Helmore
New York

Anna Delvey, the infamous "Soho Grifter", wasn't going to miss out on New York fashion week because of an electronic ankle bracelet and home detention. So fashion came to her, or more precisely to the rooftop of her East Village apartment.

In what has been judged an excitement-starved start to the city's fashion week, it was Delvey's mission to shake it up by hosting Shao, an emerging young designer, in a chaotic show under stormy skies that organiser's feared would be shut down by the police before it began.

"So much fun … too much fun to describe," was how the Russian-born Delvey, 32, whose real name is Anna Sorokin, described it.

Nicola Formichetti, stylist to Lady Gaga, said he felt Delvey was like the late British fashion icon Isabella Blow: "Super passionate without so much planning."

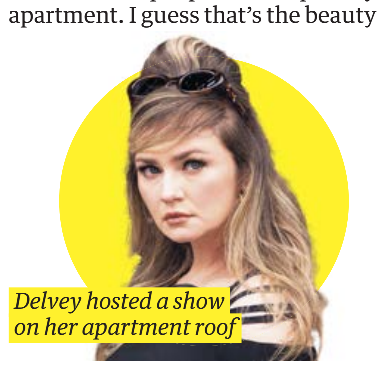
"People are obsessed with Anna. It's not like she's a fashion plate or authority, but I love the fact she's using her position to promote and elevate a young designer," he said. "I feel like no one is doing that anymore."

Delvey, 32, was arrested in 2017 and found guilty of attempted grand larceny after posing as a wealthy German art patron, blowing more than $275,000 on private jets and luxury hotel stays, and then translating that into a Netflix series, Saving Anna, which was broadcast while she was still in prison.

She remains under house arrest for overstaying her visa.

Delvey and the New York publicist, Kelly Cutrone, conceived the show in a matter of days. Against the New York skyline, the show fittingly opened to Woke Up This Morning, the Sopranos theme, and Billy Idol's Hot in the City. Models rounded the stairwell in outfits invoking tailored, punky, East Village history. But some models didn't make it to the roof, such as the chaos.

"It was a challenge," Delvey said. "I had like 30 people show up in my apartment. I guess that's the beauty of it – how to work within constraints. I'm tied to this one spot. We can't just go where ever, whenever."



Delvey hosted a show on her apartment roof

"We called the show Danger Zone," Shao Yang, the designer, added. "It's old New York, fun and spontaneous. The 80s with the culture, inclusivity, diversity, everything."

Jules Wood, a former bridal director at Vivienne Westwood and stylist of the show, described the designs as Jean-Paul Gaultier meets Bladerunner via fine tailoring.

Wood said the show nearly didn't come off. "Vivienne would have approved – a bit gorilla with a fuck you kind of attitude – and Vivienne was all about that."

Still, the crowds trying to make it up to Delvey's rooftop proved that her celebrity has not dimmed.

Paul Simon 'beginning to' accept deafness in left ear

Sian Cain

Paul Simon has said he is "beginning to" come to terms with the almost complete hearing loss in his left ear, which is affecting his ability to perform music live.

The 81-year-old singer-songwriter was speaking at the world premiere of the documentary In Restless Dreams: the Music of Paul Simon at the Toronto international film festival.

"I haven't accepted it entirely, but I'm beginning to," Simon told the audience after the screening, alongside the film's director, Alex Gibney.

"I play the guitar every day. It's the instrument that allows me to express myself creatively. But it's also where I go for solace. If I'm feeling … 'whatever'. So it's a very crucial thing to me. You know, something happens to you when you have some sort of disability that changes your awareness or changes how you interact with life."

He said there had been no improvement since he first revealed the hearing loss in May.

"Usually, when I finished an album I went out and toured with it, and then I have the opportunity to really investigate the piece. And then it evolves to another standard," Simon said. "Although a week from now I'm going to try and work with two guitarists who will play the parts that I played on the record, and see if I can sing the piece. I'm not sure how I can integrate my voice with the guitars."


The singer's music is the subject of a new film

In May, Simon revealed the hearing loss occurred while writing his most recent album, Seven Psalms. "Quite suddenly, I lost most of the hearing in my left ear, and nobody has an explanation for it," he said. "So everything became more difficult."



*To get the advertised monthly price you must enter into a Device Plan (credit agreement) for 36 months with a monthly payment of £29pm to finance the device, and a 24 month Unlimited Airtime Plan at £22pm. **From 2024, each April the Airtime Plan monthly charge will increase by up to December's CPI rate + 3.9%.** Airtime Plan monthly charge includes £5 discount for paying by a recurring method such as direct debit. Credit is provided by Hutchison 3G UK Limited at 0% APR for the duration of the credit agreement. Credit is subject to status and a credit check and for 18+ only. If you miss a payment, you may be reported to a Credit Reference Agency, and you may find it more difficult or more expensive to obtain credit in the future. Hutchison 3G UK Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for Consumer Credit, registered office: 450 Long water Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 6GF. Terms apply. Purchase any model from the Galaxy Flip5 or Fold5 Series by 04/10/23 and trade in any device currently listed by Three UK, to claim an additional payment of £300 on top of the standard trade in value of your device. Max saving of £620 consists of residual value of S21 Ultra (£200) plus trade in boost of £300 and a £120 Airtime saving (£5pm) on 24m Airtime Plan, Airtime offer ends 06/10/2023. Trade-in at three.co.uk/recycle. New device serial number required. Terms at three.co.uk. Claim a Galaxy Chromebook: Purchase a Galaxy Z Flip 5 by 28/09/2023 from a Participating Retailer. Claim by visiting: samsungoffers.claims/perfectpartners within 30 days of purchase. UK/ROI. 18+ only. For full T&C's, See samsungoffers.claims/perfectpartners

Coroner issues warning after 'butt lift' cosmetic surgery death in Turkey

Tobi Thomas

A woman who died after travelling to Turkey for buttock enlargement surgery was not given enough information to make a safe decision about the procedure, a coroner has concluded.

Melissa Kerr, 31, from Gorleston in Norfolk, travelled to the private Medicana Haznedar hospital in Istanbul for the procedure in 2019.

The inquest, taking place in Norwich, heard that Kerr was self-conscious about her appearance, and was given only "limited information regarding the risks and mortality rate" associated with the surgery.

Kerr died at the hospital on the day of the procedure, which involves fat harvested from elsewhere on the body being injected into the buttocks.

The coroner concluded that Kerr died after injected fat entered a vein before moving and blocking her pulmonary artery, with her cause of death recorded as a pulmonary thromboembolism.

Jacqueline Lake, the senior coroner for Norfolk, will write to the heath secretary regarding her concerns over people travelling overseas for cosmetic surgery.

Simon Withey, a consultant plastic surgeon who viewed evidence in the case and prepared a report for Kerr's inquest as an expert witness, said the death rate associated with Brazilian butt lifts is "likely to be in excess of one in 4,000".

He added that it is "quite possible" that, if the risk of the procedure had been explained to Kerr "before she was financially committed to proceed, she would not have done".

The inquest also saw a series of messages between Kerr and a hospital worker before she travelled to Turkey, in which she arranged to pay £3,200 in cash and said that she felt "a bit nervous" about the operation.

Kerr asked several times to see photographs of previous patients but there is no evidence they were provided. She had no known health conditions according to her GP and she had undergone a breast enlargement 10 years previously without any complications.

Recording a narrative conclusion, Lake said Kerr died after cosmetic surgery. The coroner said: "Ms Kerr wasn't seen by a surgeon or clinician prior to the date of the procedure and underwent a limited assessment prior to the procedures.

"There has been the release of an international alert to surgeons regarding the high mortality rate associated with this procedure. There has also been the introduction of a voluntary moratorium on this type of procedure in the UK.

"These are clearly not being followed in Turkey. I'm concerned patients are not being made aware of the risks or the mortality rate associated with such surgery."

Lake also offered her sympathies to Kerr's relatives, who listened to proceedings via video link.

In a statement, Kerr's family said they were devastated adding: "We hope in the future individuals give proper consideration before travelling to Turkey for cosmetic tourism."

▶ Melissa Kerr, from Gorleston in Norfolk, died after travelling to a private hospital in Istanbul for the procedure in 2019



Supply of lucrative Chinese students to UK universities 'at risk' from rifts

Richard Adams
Education editor

UK universities would be hugely damaged by a sustained diplomatic rift between Britain and China, according to a new report that predicts difficulty in replacing the Chinese students who at present take up more than one in four PhD places.

The study, co-authored by the former universities minister Jo Johnson, found that many leading institutions remain highly dependent on tuition fee income from Chinese students, as well as the need to fill postgraduate research courses in subjects such as economics, science and technology.

But a sudden inflaming of tensions between the UK and China - such as the recent arrest of a parliamentary researcher for allegedly spying for China - could see the pipeline shut off, leaving UK universities with few viable alternatives following the collapse in EU student numbers coming to the UK since Brexit.

Johnson, a visiting professor at King's College London's policy institute, said: "The sector continues to follow a 'cross your fingers' strategy that de-coupling is in the future never necessary for China … The China question therefore to a great degree remains unanswered.

"The government must urgently help universities with a framework for how to maximise the benefits from research collaboration and student and academic mobility, while managing the downsides, including the risks to national security from bad-faith actors and the dangers of over-reliance on a single country."

The KCL report recommends that the "single most effective way" for the government to reduce the reliance on Chinese students would be to raise tuition fees for UK undergraduates in line with inflation for the first time since 2016, when fees were set at £9,250 a year.

"Teaching UK students at this level will be loss-making for many higher education institutions, leaving them with few options other than to recruit international students whose fees are unregulated," it concludes.

In 2021-22, more than 3,100 Chinese students enrolled in the first year of a doctoral programme at UK universities, far above the 2,000 combined from the next three countries: the US, India and Saudi Arabia.

"With large emerging countries such as India unlikely to be plausible substitutes for the foreseeable future, finding alternatives to China that reduce its importance in the UK knowledge economy remains no simple undertaking," the report states.

In the space of five years the proportion of PhD places held by Chinese nationals has risen from 17% to 28% while the number of EU doctoral students plummeted by 42%. The KCL report also noted that Chinese doctoral students were concentrated in leading research centres: the most recent figures show 80% were studying at Russell Group universities.

Nine Russell Group universities had more than 5,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students from China in 2021-22, while University College London alone currently has more than 10,000 Chinese students in its student body of 44,000.

> **'The sector continues to follow a 'cross your fingers' strategy [with regards to China]'**
>
> **Jo Johnson**
> *Ex-universities minister*

Last week it was revealed that a parliamentary researcher had been arrested under the Official Secrets Act, leading to Rishi Sunak confronting Li Qiang, the Chinese premier, over China's "unacceptable" interference. The researcher has insisted: "I am completely innocent."

A new report by the House of Lords castigates the Office for Students (OfS), the higher education regulator for England, for failing to prepare the sector for the financial instability that the withdrawal of Chinese students would cause.

The report by the Lords' industry and regulators committee said there was a "worrying complacency" over the dependency on international student fees that failed to take account of the "risks of geopolitical shifts", especially involving Chinese students.

The committee argued that the OfS "lacks independence from the government and that its actions often appear driven by the ebb and flow of short-term political priorities and media headlines."

Lord Hollick, the committee's chair, said: "It was evident throughout our inquiry that the OfS is failing to deliver and does not command the trust or respect of either providers, or students, the very people whose interests it is supposed to defend.

"We were surprised by the regulator's view that the sector's finances are in good shape, which is not an assessment that we or most of our witnesses share."

James Wharton, the OfS's chair, said in response that his organisation was "alive to significant risks, including the impact of a fixed undergraduate tuition fee, cost pressures and an overreliance by some on international students. Our important work in this area is often not publicly visible."

Exiles

We are no strangers to being spied on, says activist

Ben Quinn
Political Correspondent

Finn Lau's meeting with a Westminster researcher who was later arrested on suspicion of spying for China lasted just 20 minutes, but nearly a year later he is mulling the potential consequences.

Lau, an exiled Hong Kong pro-democracy activist with a £100,000 bounty on his head, has a lingering suspicion that some of his ideas for putting more pressure on China appear not to have made it beyond their meeting. Exiled Chinese dissidents like Lau, as well as Hong Kong activists and others including advocates of Tibetan independence and China's Uyghurs, have raised concerns after news of the researcher's arrest emerged at the weekend. The man, who has not been named by police, has said he is "completely innocent" and rejected what he said was "extravagant news reporting". But these communities have long complained of being the target of surveillance by Chinese authorities, at demonstrations or online. Claims that China operates "overseas police service stations" in Britain have also been a concern.

"We are no strangers to being spied on, but this week has caused people to sit up and take notice. This is a story that has gone viral among the Chinese community here," said Lau, who continues to take security countermeasures every time he steps out in London.

He says he was most recently the target of an attempt to interview him by someone posing as a reporter from a reputable Chinese radio news station.

On Sunday it was revealed that the researcher, in his 20s, who had a parliamentary pass and contact with ministers, was arrested under the Official Secrets Act in March. The man is not thought to have family ties to China.

Lau said: "It has not changed my behaviour. But I think people will also now be even more careful about who they engage with, no matter what the colour of their skin. You might say that there is even a benefit to that, if it punctures the stereotypes of what an alleged Chinese spy should be."





◀ *Pro-democracy campaigners such as Finn Lau, below, have called for tighter staff vetting at parliament*
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID LEVENE/GUARDIAN

Lau called for an audit of vetting in parliament - a system that he and Hong Kong activists also argue sometimes makes it difficult for them to engage with the democratic process in the UK.

The MP Tim Loughton spoke this week of how had he tried to hire an intern who had come to the UK from Hong Kong, but parliamentary security rejected them because they hadn't been in the UK for three years and had come from China.

In a call echoed by Amnesty International, Chung Ching Kwong, a Hong-Kong born democracy activist now living in the UK, urged reassurances to be given to those who gave information to parliamentarians and who now fear they may be at risk.

"Rather than MPs, it is the Uyghurs, Tibetans, Taiwanese, Chinese dissidents and Hongkongers that are and will be the ones to suffer," she said. "Has anyone briefed the activists and dissidents that may have been affected due to potential security failure? At least flag to people what kind of trouble they are now being put into." She added: "A lot of Chinese dissident activists do sensitive work in this field and I do think that people should be worried - not necessarily in the sense that they may have to change their address immediately - but people should definitely be doing an audit of what kind of information they may have shared."

Repairs to local roads to stop potholes at lowest level in five years

Gwyn Topham
Transport correspondent

The mileage of local roads in England being resurfaced or treated to avoid potholes has fallen to its lowest level in five years, research has shown.

There has been a decline of almost a third in the total amount of life-extending road maintenance by local councils, according to analysis of government data by the RAC motoring organisation.

Only 1,123 miles of roads were surfaced in 2021-22, compared with 1,588 miles in 2017-18, while only 3,551 miles, down from 5,345 miles four years earlier, were maintained with surface dressing - the more cost-effective preventative method, according to the road repair industry.

The RAC said the figures helped explain the decline in England's roads - widely described as "pothole plagued" this year with an estimated repair backlog of £12bn - and called on the government to do more to support councils in maintaining roads, including ring-fencing funding.

It found that of 153 roads authorities surveyed in the latest data, 31% did no resurfacing, while 51% failed to carry out any surface dressing.

The RAC's head of policy, Simon Williams, said: "These figures paint an incredibly stark picture of road maintenance in England … While the government has made more money available to authorities to fill potholes, it's the general reduction in road improvement work that's causing potholes to appear in the first place. It's abundantly clear that councils in so many areas are barely scratching the surface when it comes to getting their roads up to a reasonable standard."

The Local Government Association said the huge backlog was caused by years of funding cuts, followed by recent inflation in the cost of repairs.

A Department for Transport spokesperson said: "It's for local authorities to maintain their highways, and to help them do that we're investing more than £5bn from 2020 to 2025, with an extra £200m announced at the budget in March, to resurface roads."

Authoritarian regimes on visitors' list as arms fair opens in London

Dan Sabbagh
Defence and security editor

Europe's biggest-ever arms fair got under way in London yesterday, with record numbers expected to attend, boosted by interest from countries with controversial human rights records.

Authoritarian Egypt and Vietnam were among those sending delegations, a defence source said, as were Indonesia and India, all countries whose arms purchasing strategies have been affected by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

A handful of delegations were coming to DSEI (Defence & Security Equipment International) who "would normally be Russian export customers," the source added.

"But what they've seen on the Russian side of the battlefield has persuaded them there is an opportunity to diversify."

In particular, Russian firms are said to be struggling to fill export orders, because so much of the country's stock is being used on the battlefield, where the war in Ukraine has now passed the 18-month mark with no obvious end in sight.

Sam Perlo-Freedman, a researcher at Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), said: "A lot of countries that are being talked about as new arms export markets are ones we would be concerned about. Egypt is a repressive regime and Vietnam an absolute dictatorship. Indonesia is involved in brutality in west Papua."

A full list of countries sending delegations published by the UK government includes eight from the Foreign Office's own list of human rights priority countries. As well as Egypt, they include Bangladesh, Colombia, Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, with the Saudi presence particularly notable on the opening day.

The arms fair is being held at the ExCeL centre in the capital's Docklands and 1,600 manufacturers and related firms are exhibiting. Clarion Events, the organiser, said it expected "all records" to be broken at the four-day trade show.

Grant Shapps is due to make his first public speech as defence secretary tomorrow at the event, which is not just fully supported by the Ministry of Defence but is protected by an intense Metropolitan police operation that cost £3m when the arms fair was held two years ago.

Arms trade campaigners had spent several days trying to disrupt preparations for the show. Twelve people have been arrested, including nine last Thursday when activists blocked the road in front of one of the gates.

Arms exports data is only gradually being published but there is growing evidence that 2022 was a year of rapid growth, amid a wider rearmament prompted by the invasion of Ukraine and the shift from Russian to western exports.



▲ *A cage of display firearms on its way to a manufacturer's stand on day one of the DSEI trade show in London yesterday* PHOTOGRAPH: LEON NEAL/GETTY IMAGES





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Over a third of UK medical students get no sexual misconduct training, research finds

Anna Bawden

More than a third of UK medical students do not receive sexual misconduct training, new research has found.

The study by researchers at the University of Cambridge, published by JRSM Open, found that almost half of medical schools offered no training, or only generalised harassment training that was not specific to sexual misconduct or that was wholly outside the context of being a doctor.

Analysing responses from the UK's 34 medical schools to freedom of information requests, the research found there was no standardisation of training on sexual misconduct across medical universities.

"Graduates from more than one-third of schools in the UK are leaving their medical training without being educated on sexual misconduct and the medical profession anywhere in their degrees. It cannot be assumed, therefore, that graduates who are working as junior doctors have received training on sexual misconduct before starting their NHS roles," the authors write.

They add that medical students, as future clinicians, have a crucial and strategic need for education that allows them to perform a critical role in exhibiting good behaviour, and intervening, identifying, assessing and reporting sexual misconduct when they see it happening at work or in wider society.

The findings come as a report by the working party on sexual misconduct in surgery found that nearly one in three female surgeons working in the NHS had been sexually assaulted in the past five years.

In addition, the research found that 29% of women had experienced unwanted physical advances at work, more than 40% had received uninvited comments about their body and 38% said they had received sexual "banter" at work.

And a Guardian/British Medical Journal investigation in May found more than 35,600 "sexual safety incidents" had been recorded in NHS hospitals in England over the past five years. That prompted the General Medical Council to call on doctors to show "zero tolerance" of sexual harassment.



▲ *The General Medical Council has called on doctors to show 'zero tolerance' of sexual harassment*
PHOTOGRAPH: STURTI/GETTY

The researchers point to serious shortcomings within the health sector in preventing and addressing sexual misconduct, with costs in damages to address sexual misconduct in the NHS exceeding £4m in the last five years.

Dr Sarah Steele, the lead researcher on the report, said: "With so little training, it's little surprise that rates of sexual assault and harassment in healthcare are so high. In a profession dedicated to healing, the persistent plague of sexual misconduct shatters trust and tarnishes the NHS."

She added: "To produce competent, compassionate doctors, the NHS and clinical schools across the country must urgently prioritise rectifying this glaring oversight. Training is critical to ensure that silence and complicity have no place in the halls of healing."

Dr Chelcie Jewitt, co-founder of Surviving in Scrubs, said: "It comes as no surprise that there are so few universities that are providing adequate training around the issue of sexual misconduct within healthcare, even though it is most definitely needed.

"The hierarchical structure of medical training leaves medical students in a particularly vulnerable position when it comes to experiencing sexual misconduct within the workplace and medical students should be given training on how to recognise and report it."

Survivor's story

Rachel,* plastic surgeon

I was raped by a senior trainee in the 1990s. He groomed me with stories over weeks of helping me with my CV and getting a training number.

By doing that, he found a way to invite me to his hospital accommodation flat on site. It was such a small room, I can still see it vividly: the window, the bed and no space to really move around. We stood close to each other out of necessity and I am embarrassed still to say how naive I was.

He turned to me and started kissing me. Then he pushed me on to the bed and raped me. I felt sick. I can still remember how he smelt. I dreaded seeing him in conferences. I blamed myself for years, and asked myself how I could have been so stupid. Afterwards he gaslighted me with comments like "you make it sound like I raped you but you came up freely" and made me feel so small, so stupid, that I felt I had to somehow pretend nothing had ever happened.

There was no way I felt I could speak up. It took years to talk about it, but only in close circles and never mentioning his name. I have felt ashamed and have spent all these years blaming myself, asking how I could have been so naive, such easy fodder.

People don't realise what an institutionalised closed shop surgery is. Too often it's a safe space for men to act badly and assert dominance, because women feel that if they speak up, it limits their careers. What's needed is a truly independent body to allow women to speak up, action be taken and for those women to be able to seek independent help so that our stories end with a small sense of justice and we all feel safe.

As told to Anna Bawden

** Not her real name*



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'One every other day': rate at which environmental activists are killed

Patrick Greenfield



▶ *Activists and relatives of Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira marking the first anniversary of their murders*
PHOTOGRAPH: BRUNA PRADO/AP

At least 177 people were killed last year for defending the environment, according to new figures, with a fifth of the murders taking place in the Amazon rainforest.

Environmental defenders were killed by organised crime groups and land invaders at a rate of one every other day in 2022, figures from the NGO Global Witness show. Colombia was the most deadly country, recording 60 murders.

Indigenous communities were disproportionately represented in the figures, making up 34% of all murders, despite representing about 5% of the world's population.

The new figures mean at least 1,910 environmental defenders have been killed between 2012 and 2022, according to Global Witness, with most of the murders going unpunished.

Brazil, Mexico, Honduras and the Philippines were the next most deadly countries in 2022 after Colombia. Nearly 88% of all lethal attacks were recorded in Latin America, including the killings of the Brazilian activist Bruno Pereira and the journalist Dom Phillips in June.

The figures are a drop from the 200 killings recorded in 2021 but remain high, prompting Global Witness to call for special protections for environmental defenders protecting climate-critical ecosystems.

The report highlights the scramble for resources in Latin America, Asia and Africa as a driver of the violence, including the extraction of rare-earth minerals used in the production of electric cars and wind turbines.

"For too long, those responsible for lethal attacks against defenders have been getting away with murder," said Shruti Suresh, the co-director of campaigns at Global Witness.

"Despite being threatened by irresponsible corporate and government actions, this global movement of people, united by determination and a commitment to defending their homes and communities, are standing firm – and they cannot and will not be silenced."

Global Witness is urging governments to enforce laws to create a safe environment for people trying to protect their ecosystems. It has called for businesses to ensure that their supply chains and activities are not involved in driving the violence.

> *'For too long, those responsible have been getting away with murder'*
>
> **Shruti Suresh**
> *Global Witness*

The NGO said underreporting of attacks meant the figures were probably an underestimate. Non-lethal attacks were likely to be far higher, but were hard to record, it said.

Laura Furones, a forest governance expert who advised on the report, highlighted attacks against Indigenous communities as a particular cause for concern.

"Research has shown again and again that Indigenous peoples are the best guardians of the forests and therefore play a fundamental role in mitigating the climate crisis," she said. "Yet they are under siege in countries like Brazil, Peru and Venezuela for doing precisely that.

"If we are to keep the forests standing, we must recognise that this relies upon the protection of those who call the forest home."

Afghanistan Emergency Appeal

£82 could help provide a lifesaving Emergency Payment for a parent to feed their child.

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Emergency Payments are one of the most effective ways to help. The payments support the local economy, are relatively quick and inexpensive to administer and, crucially, allow families like Noor's to prioritise the needs most important to them, whether for food, medicine or fuel.

Noor lives with her four children, including 8-year-old Behtar who is pictured above, in an isolated mountain-top cabin, with pieces of threadbare fabric covering where the doors and windows should be.

Noor used to earn a little money washing clothes, but work has dried up. Like millions of her fellow Afghans, she has run out of options.



UNHCR/Oxygen Film Studio

*Behtar's name, and the names of all individuals, have been changed to help protect their identities.

"With our income, what can I buy? Sometimes my children do not eat for three days because I cannot buy food to cook for them. If we die here on this mountain, no-one will pay attention."

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MPs should open their minds to benefits of meditation, says report

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

More than 300 British politicians have been trained in mindfulness in the last decade, new estimates suggest, sparking fresh calls for a parliament to get a meditation room.

About 120 MPs, including Tracey Crouch, the Conservative former minister and Clive Lewis, of Labour, plus about 180 peers have joined courses in the secular practice, which is rooted in ancient Buddhist meditation techniques, a report has found.

The new figures show that one in 10 MPs serving in the last decade have had meditation training delivered by the parliamentary authorities.

The scale of its spread at Westminster emerged as the mindfulness all-party parliamentary group backed a report which calls for further resources "to support politicians with either beginning or maintaining their mindfulness practice, including consideration of a specific physical space for politicians to practise".

A mindfulness room has been suggested as part of the multibillion-pound overhaul of the parliamentary estate. In recent years, politicians have meditated in committee rooms and meeting rooms in Portcullis House. The Australian parliament in Canberra has had a meditation space since it opened in 1988.

Several MPs have praised the impact of mindfulness on their working lives. In the report published today and endorsed by the mindfulness all-party group, Scott Mann, the Tory MP for North Cornwall, said he felt "more centred" and able to take on the concerns of constituents and local business owners.

Crouch said she takes her shoes off in the chamber before giving a speech to "mindfully feel the ground beneath her feet and help anchor herself to improve performance".

The effectiveness of the practice remains contested. Mindfulness and meditation, including mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, is available on the NHS and is recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence for the treatment and management of depression in adults. But a study of school-based training showed it did not appear to improve the mental health of teenagers.

"Mindfulness is not a panacea, either in terms of the contribution it can make to politicians' individual wellbeing, or to their working environment," said Ruth Ormston of the Mindfulness Initiative charity. "But the accounts highlighted in our report do suggest that this evidence-based psychological training provides essential support for many politicians to carry out their roles more effectively."

Labour MP Lewis said the quality of acceptance emphasised in mindfulness practice helped him be more forgiving when something like a TV interview doesn't go to plan. "It helps me to draw a line under something and move on to the next thing, with fewer self-critical thoughts sabotaging my future performance," he said.

Urging more mindfulness training at Westminster, the report concludes: "Given that in a representative democracy millions depend upon the cognitive, emotional, and relational competencies of a small appointed group, we suggest that such training is not simply a 'nice to have'."

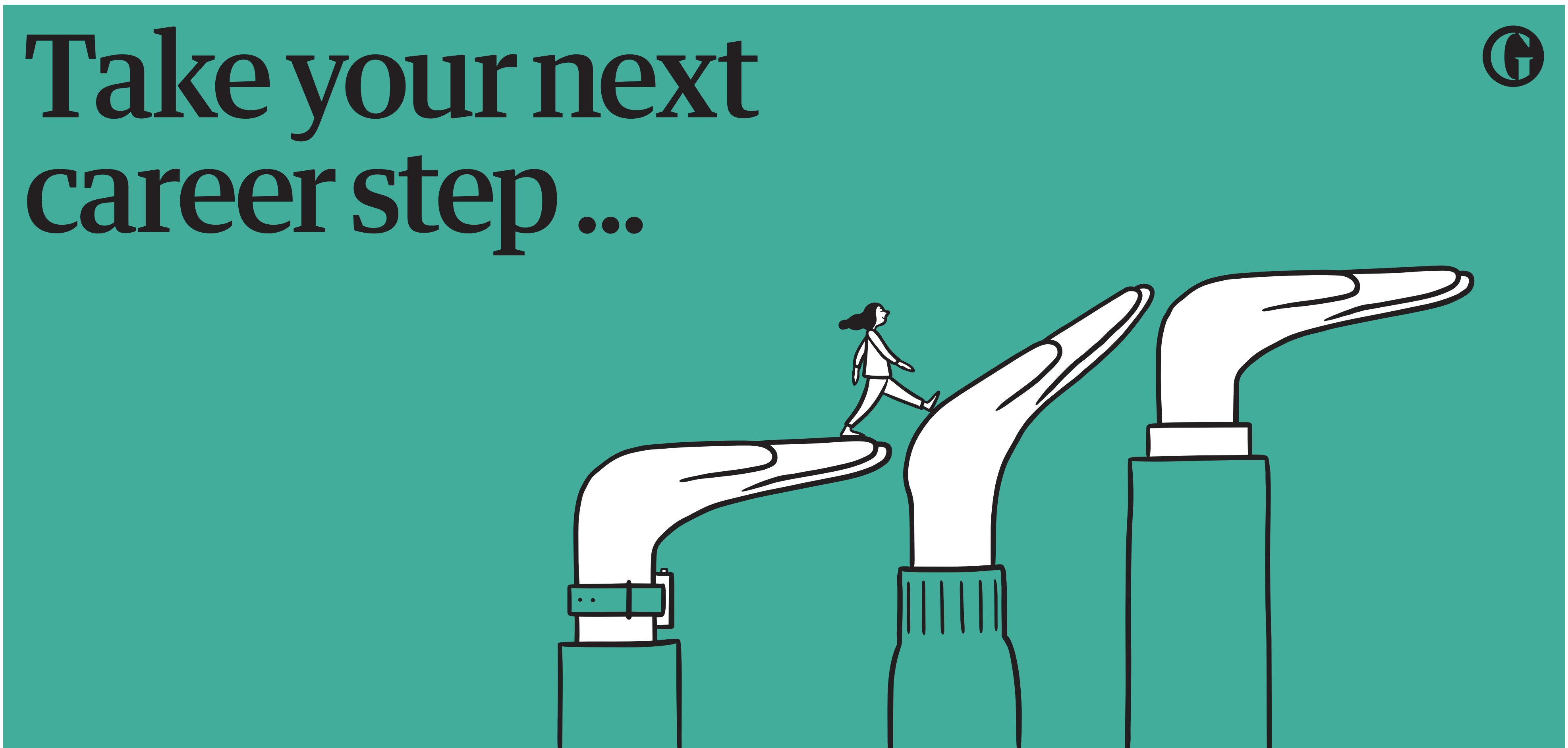


▼ *Labour MP Clive Lewis said mindfulness helped him be more forgiving when things went wrong*
PHOTOGRAPH: GRAEME ROBERTSON/THE GUARDIAN

A beginners' guide

- **Make time in the morning for meditation, a walk or a slow cup of tea. Make a conscious transition to the working day.**
- **Create a focused environment – turn off alerts, plan when to look at emails and messages.**
- **Check your posture and take a deep breath before sending an email or making a phone call.**
- **Take time to prioritise the day, keep an uncluttered workspace and allocate time for deeper work.**
- **Listen in meetings. Notice a person's expression, emotion and posture. Notice your reaction in body and mind. Accept both.**
- **Eat and drink away from your desk, and savour the flavours.**
- **Stretch and take a five-minute walk between meetings.**
- **Counter human negativity bias by noticing three things you appreciate each day.**
- **Set aside 10 minutes between meetings to practise a mindfulness of breath and body meditation.**

Robert Booth



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Eyewitness



▲ Sandra models for Pidoux in London, 1939. The suit is chic but the helmets and kit remind viewers of the reality of that moment



▶ Irmgard Seefried, a soprano, sings an aria from Puccini's Madama Butterfly amid the ruins of the Vienna Opera House, Austria, 1945



▲ Boot and ammunition, St Malo, France, 1944. Penrose wrote: 'At unexpected moments, there is the kind of image only a surrealist could take.'



▶ Auxiliary Territorial Service searchlight operators in London, 1943. Enemy gunners shot at the lights - 731 ATS women died or went missing



▼ *Life magazine's star photographer Margaret Bourke White at 8th Bomber Command in Northamptonshire in 1942*





Surrealism and war: Lee Miller
The pioneering American photojournalist, war correspondent, model and surrealist muse Lee Miller is the subject of a new book from Thames and Hudson, Lee Miller: Photographs, by her son Antony Penrose. With a foreword by the actor Kate Winslet, it tells the story of the second world war through Miller's lens. Winslet plays her in the biopic Lee.
PHOTOGRAPHS: LEE MILLER ARCHIVES

▲ *Interrogation of a French woman who has had her hair shaved off for consorting with Germans, Rennes, France, 1944*



▶ *Parachute packer, Fleet Air Arm, RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset, 1941*

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Family fortunes
Mnangagwa hands out jobs to relatives
Page 29

Lord of the ring fence
Peter Jackson buys up land to foil developers
Page 31



World



A man walks through the rubble of houses in Douzrou, a remote village in the High Atlas mountains
PHOTOGRAPH: FADEL SENNA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

'We don't have a tent yet and we really need one … we don't know who to ask to get a tent'
Hayat ait Louchine

Moroccans take aid efforts into own hands amid concerns over official help

Peter Beaumont
Talat N'Yaaqoub

Morocco's national route 10 was once a pretty road through the High Atlas mountains, linking Marrakech to Agadir on the coast.

Winding through steep-sided valleys, it has now become one of the key routes to reach the communities closest to the epicentre of last week's earthquake, which has now claimed 2,900 lives.

With the road partly opened since the weekend as far as the devastated community of Talat N'Yaaqoub, about 12 miles from the epicentre, it has also become the route of choice for thousands of Moroccans driving their own aid to the mountains amid increasing frustration with the government's efforts.

It is not an easy road or a safe one. In places the narrow paving has slipped into the valley below. Elsewhere, boulders and landslides have fallen on the road, now pushed aside by the earth-movers that have been brought up to open the route.



The funeral of an earthquake victim in Talat N'Yaaqoub. The death toll is now approaching 3,000
PHOTOGRAPH: MOHAMED MESSARA/EPA

Signs of fresh rockfalls serve as a warning of how fragile this lifeline remains, especially if rain comes.

Since it opened on Sunday night it has been transformed into an endless series of dusty traffic jams, with the traffic managed by soldiers, Berber villagers and members of the Royal Gendarmerie who have been stationed along the road to guide the huge aid trucks into the mountains.

But mostly it is ordinary Moroccans who have taken to this mountain route to help their countrymen. Their vehicles are loaded with mattresses and plastic sheeting, bundles of clothes and bedding for the cold mountain nights. At one spot where the road widened, vehicles unloaded aid, including bottled water and shelters, into big piles to be taken further up the mountains.

As rescue efforts continued, questions remained about the state's response. King Mohammed VI returned from France on Saturday to chair a disaster management meeting with the cabinet but he has not spoken directly to the public.

Hassan Aourid, one of Morocco's most prominent intellectuals and a former palace spokesperson, spoke to the Guardian from the town of Amizmiz, at the foot of the mountain range, while volunteering with rescue efforts.

"At first, there was a sentiment among the population that they had been left to fend for themselves, given that this a mountainous region with many areas that are extremely difficult to access," he said. "People felt abandoned, although this was not the case due to the deployment of the armed forces who also brought first responders with them, as well as setting up hospitals.

"Without question, there is now a feeling of reassurance, people are much more reassured after the king's emergency meeting," he added.

The king arrived in Marrakech, the major city closest to the earthquake zone, yesterday evening and visited victims in hospital, according to state media. But there has been little suggestion of a royal visit to the impoverished Al Haouz region worst affected by the disaster.

There has also been criticism that Morocco has turned down offers of more international assistance.

In Talat N'Yaaqoub, once home to 3,000 people, helicopters cut across the mountain ridges towards Ighil, the epicentre of the disaster, still inaccessible by road.

A Chinook landed in the town, enveloping the streets in dust. It is big enough to carry a substantial cargo of aid, but when its rotors halted a few senior army officers emerged accompanied by a cameraman.

The proximity to the epicentre is obvious. While concrete buildings have remained standing in other places, in Talat N'Yaaqoub the concrete floors of offices and shops have concertinaed and collapsed. The extensive central market has been destroyed, while the tower of a mosque teeters over the ruins.

On the main street, people, some of them still in a state of profound shock, sat waiting on benches. Hayat ait Louchine, 24, had gone to visit the hammam baths when the earthquake struck. At home, her six-year-old niece had been killed.

"We don't have a tent yet, and we really need one as it is so cold up here in the mountains," she said. "We're worried what will happen if it rains but we don't know who to ask to get a tent."

Israel in turmoil as court considers curbs on judiciary

Bethan McKernan
Jerusalem

Israel's supreme court justices began hearing petitions yesterday against a significant part of the rightwing government's judicial changes limiting the court's powers, a development that could trigger an unprecedented constitutional crisis.

For the first time, a panel of all 15 judges convened to discuss eight filings aimed at striking down the clause, passed by the Knesset in July, that abolished the supreme court's ability to overrule government decisions on grounds of "unreasonableness".

The hearings put the country's top judges in the position of deciding on their own roles. The government has indicated it will not comply if the court strikes down the law, which would mark the first time it had overturned a semi-constitutional "basic law". Such a move would plunge Israel into uncharted political and legal waters; the figurehead president, Isaac Herzog, has repeatedly warned of civil war.

Protesters in their hundreds gathered outside the court building in Jerusalem as the hearing began, banging drums, blowing whistles, chanting and waving Israeli flags. Several dozen rightwing activists arrived later, shouting "the people are the sovereign" and held signs declaring they had voted for the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and not the supreme court's chief justice, Esther Hayut.

"We are already in a constitutional crisis: government ministers have made no secret of their intentions to remove gatekeepers such as the attorney general and instead nominate people who will protect them," said Noa Sattath of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, which filed a submission to the court along with 37 other human rights organisations.



Israel's supreme court hears petitions against ministers' attempt to limit its power, amid warnings of civil war in the country
PHOTOGRAPH: DEBBIE HILL/UPI/SHUTTERSTOCK

"The supreme court says it will only strike down a basic law in exceptional circumstances. Our argument to the justices is that they need to look at the full picture here, not just a case by case basis. The sum total of these changes and laws from the coalition will undermine our democratic structures."

A ruling could be passed down at any time within the next four months, but the opening session of the court hearing was watched closely for initial clues about which way the justices will lean. The court comprises liberal and conservative judges.

Addressing the government's legal representatives, Hayut said: "It's clear you think that the duty to act reasonably applies to the government and its ministers … But who makes sure they indeed do so?"

At the behest of his new coalition partners, Netanyahu introduced a package of sweeping judicial changes when he returned to office in December. The legislation is aimed at curbing the influence of the supreme court, which the Israeli right has long alleged is biased and too powerful for an unelected body.

The planned changes, including limiting the court's ability to overturn laws and giving politicians more control over judicial appointments, have been denounced by critics as a transparent power grab that will erode democratic norms and aid Netanyahu's fight against corruption charges, which he denies.

The proposals have split Israel along lines of religion, ethnicity and class, thrown the military into chaos, damaged the shekel, and led to public concern for the country's democratic health from allies such as the US.

In the next few weeks, the court is also due to hear petitions against two more bitterly contested pieces of legislation passed by Netanyahu's coalition of rightwing and religious parties. Critics say these are designed to protect the position of the prime minister and his political allies.

"The very discussion about the possibility of striking down basic laws, which are the top of the legal pyramid in Israel, and the possibility of declaring the prime minister incapacitated, are mortal damage to a government by the people," the justice minister, Yariv Levin, the architect of the judicial proposals, said yesterday morning.

"The court, whose judges elect themselves behind closed doors and without a protocol, has set itself above the government, above the Knesset, above the people and above the law … That situation is completely contrary to democracy. It means a court without checks and balances at all," said Levin.

'Wolf pack' rapist's term cut under changes to consent laws

Sam Jones
Madrid

One of the five men convicted of the notorious "wolf pack" gang rape in Spain seven years ago has had his sentence reduced under the botched sexual consent legislation that was introduced by the socialist-led government in the wake of public anger about the case.

The rape, which took place during the running of the bulls festival in Pamplona in July 2016, shocked the country, and nationwide protests erupted after the five defendants were initially convicted of the lesser offence of sexual abuse.

The rapists, who called themselves *la manada,* the wolf pack, in their WhatsApp group, had their prison sentences increased from nine to 15 years each after the supreme court subsequently found them guilty of raping the 18-year-old woman.

Outrage over the case led successive Spanish governments to re-examine the issue of sexual consent, and new legislation popularly known as the "only yes means yes" law came into effect last October. It overhauled the criminal code by making sexual consent - or a lack of it - key in determining assault cases, in an



A demonstration over the rape convictions in Madrid, featuring the slogan 'we will howl in a pack'
PHOTOGRAPH: MARCOS DEL MAZO/LIGHTROCKET

effort to define all non-consensual sex as rape.

It also cut the minimum and maximum jail sentences, leading to some offenders having their terms reduced on appeal. More than 1,000 convicted sex offenders have used that loophole to get their sentences cut, and more than 100 have used it to secure early release. In April this year, the prime minister, Pedro Sánchez, apologised to victims for what he called the undesired effects of the new law.

Yesterday, the high court in the northern region of Navarre, whose capital is Pamplona, announced it had reduced the sentence of one of the "wolf pack" rapists from 15 years to 14 years in light of the new legislation.

In their ruling, the judges said they had accepted an appeal to reduce the man's sentence to bring it in line with the new law, which lowers the minimum available sentence from 14 years and three months to 13 years. As the supreme court had imposed jail time close to the minimum possible sentence for the offence, they said, they had decided to reduce the sentence accordingly.

However, one of the court's judges, Esther Erice, opposed the reduction, saying it could not be based on "mere criteria of arithmetic proportionality" and needed to take into account all the elements that had informed the supreme court's original sentence. The decision can still be challenged at the supreme court.

Spain's acting equality minister, Irene Montero, who pushed the new sexual offences legislation, said: "This decision from the Navarre high court is very painful, especially for the victim. We share her pain and we know that all victims deserve reparation."

Opposition parties, which have repeatedly attacked the government for pressing on with the changes, lawyers and MPs, said the reduced sentence was proof of the Sánchez's administration's contempt for victims of sexual assault.

Family opposes Netflix series about French tycoon Tapie

Kim Willsher
Paris

The family of one of France's best known personalities, the businessman, actor, singer and former politician Bernard Tapie, have attacked a Netflix miniseries based on his colourful life.

The series is described as half-biopic, half-fiction. Tapie died two years ago aged 78. He was born the son of a Paris plumber and he rose to become president of Olympique de Marseille (OM) football club and to hold a large stake in the sportswear brand Adidas.

The first of seven episodes inspired by the tycoon will be released by Netflix today despite vehement opposition from Tapie's widow, Dominique, and children.

Dominique told journalists: "The producers said it was a fiction, but a fiction called Bernard Tapie? I do not condone it and I remind everyone that we were not consulted."

Before his death in 2021, her husband expressed his objections to the series. He died aged 78 having been diagnosed with stomach cancer.

Tapie was elected as an MP in 1989 and served two stints as the urban affairs minister. He later served a jail sentence for match-fixing and his business began unravelling after he sold Adidas, which caused one of France's longest legal sagas and embroiled politicians and ministers.

Putin: Trump persecuted by rotten US political system

Andrew Roth

Vladimir Putin has described the recent indictments of Donald Trump as "political persecution" as the Russian leader waded back into a US presidential campaign for the third consecutive election cycle.

Putin made the remarks during an economic forum in the far eastern city of Vladivostok, where he is also due to hold meetings with Kim Jong-un, the North Korean leader, this week.

"Everything happening to Trump is political persecution of a political rival. That's what it is," Putin said.

"And this is happening before the eyes of the United States public and entire world. As for the persecution of Trump, I believe that everything happening at the moment is good. Because it demonstrates the rottenness of the American political system, which cannot pretend to teach others about democracy."

Putin's words align with those of supporters of the former US president, who has been accused of inciting the crowds that rioted at the Capitol in January 2021 after his defeat to Joe Biden.

Trump was indicted last month for inciting public officials to violate their oaths of office and filing false documents as he promoted claims that the election had been stolen through ballot box manipulation.

Putin said that Trump's offers to negotiate with Russia over its war in Ukraine had "pleased him", but said he thought that US policy toward Russia would not change, regardless of whether Trump becomes president next year. "Even though they accused him of having a special relationship with Russia, which is complete nonsense, he imposed sanctions on Russia more than anyone else while he was president," Putin said.

"Therefore, it is difficult to say what to expect from the future president, no matter who the president is, but it is unlikely that anything will change radically."

US intelligence officials have accused Putin of personally authorising influence operations against Democratic candidates in support of Trump in the 2016 and 2020 US presidential elections.

Yevgeny Prigozhin, a former Putin ally who also managed online influence operations, admitted in November that he had interfered in the US elections. "Gentlemen, we interfered, we are interfering and we will interfere," he said in the run-up to the US midterms. Prigozhin was killed last month when his private jet crashed en route from Moscow to St Petersburg.

Yesterday Putin also accused the British intelligence services of training Ukrainian forces to launch attacks on Russian nuclear infrastructure, citing an unspecified attack that he said involved powerlines that could result in an emergency shutdown of a major power plant. "The saboteurs said during interrogation they had been trained under the supervision of British instructors," he said, offering no evidence to back up the claim.

> **'US can't pretend to teach others about democracy'**
>
> **Vladimir Putin**
> *Russian president*

"Do they realise what they are playing at? Are they provoking us to take some kind of retaliatory action against Ukrainian nuclear power plants?" he added.

"I know that my words will make them howl again about threats, nuclear blackmail and so on. Rest assured that what I have just said is the complete, absolute and pure truth. We have the guys in custody and they are testifying.

"I know about a possible reaction: they will tell you whatever you want at gunpoint. No, that's not so. The administration of British security services knows that I am telling the truth."



▶ *Putin and Trump in 2018. Putin has said Trump's offer to negotiate with Russia over the war pleased him*
PHOTOGRAPH: BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP/GETTY

Impeachment inquiry demand over Biden family dealings

Associated Press

The US House of Representatives speaker, Kevin McCarthy, has confirmed he is directing a House committee to open an impeachment inquiry into the president, Joe Biden, over his family's business dealings.

He said the oversight committee's inquiry so far had found a "culture of corruption" around the Biden family, as Republicans examine the business dealings of Biden's son, Hunter Biden, before the president took office. "These are allegations of abuse of power, obstruction and corruption, and they warrant further investigation," McCarthy said.

"That's why today I am directing our House committee to open a formal impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden."

The Republican leader has faced mounting pressure from his right flank to take action against Biden as he struggles to pass the legislation needed to avoid a federal government shutdown at the end of the month. Government funding is to run out on 30 September, which is the end of the federal fiscal year.

The Biden administration has dismissed the impeachment push as politically motivated. "Speaker McCarthy shouldn't cave to the extreme, far-right members who are threatening to shut down the government unless they get a baseless, evidence-free impeachment of President Biden. The consequences for the American people are too serious," a spokesman said.

The White House has insisted Biden was not involved in his son's business dealings. Democrats on the oversight committee are stepping up to oppose what they view as unfounded claims against Biden to balk his 2024 re-election.

Musk's move to hire Giuliani as fixer ditched after 'mob scene'

Martin Pengelly
Washington

Elon Musk backed away from a plan to recruit Rudy Giuliani as a political fixer to help him turn PayPal into a bank in 2001 after he and an associate found Giuliani "surrounded by goonish confidantes" in an office that felt "like a mob scene".

"This guy occupies a different planet," Musk said of Giuliani.

Giuliani, who was New York mayor at the time, left that office in December 2001 after leading New York through the 9/11 attacks. He then ran for the Republican nomination for president in 2008. He became an attorney and ally to Donald Trump but missed out on a cabinet appointment in 2016.

The first impeachment of Trump was fuelled by Giuliani's work in Ukraine, seeking political dirt on opponents. Now 79, Giuliani has pleaded not guilty to 13 criminal charges of racketeering and conspiracy regarding his work to advance Trump's attempt to overturn the 2020 election in Georgia.

The irony of the former mayor and New York US attorney being indicted on charges often used by him against figures in organised crime has been widely remarked on. As a prosecutor, Giuliani made his name chasing down mafia kingpins.

The latest picture of Giuliani as akin to a gangster is included in a new biography of Musk, the owner of Tesla, SpaceX, and X, and sometime world's richest man. The biography, entitled Elon Musk, by Walter Isaacson, whose other subjects have included Steve Jobs, was widely excerpted in US media before its publication yesterday.

The brief meeting between Musk and Giuliani came about, Isaacson writes, as Musk sought to turn PayPal, the online payments company he co-founded, into "a social network that would disrupt the whole banking industry" - a vision he now harbours for Twitter, which he bought in October 2022 and renamed as X this year.

"We have to decide whether we are going to aim big," Musk told those who worked for him, according to Isaacson. The author adds that some "believed Musk's framing was flawed". Describing stymied attempts to rebrand, Isaacson writes: "Focus groups showed that the name X.com … conjured up visions of a seedy site you would not talk about in polite company. But Musk was unwavering and remains so to this day."

Such discussions, Isaacson says, led Musk and an investor, Michael Moritz, to go to New York to try to recruit Giuliani, who was just ending his tenure as mayor, to be a political fixer and guide them through the intricacies of being a bank. "But as soon as they walked into his office they knew it would not work." Moritz is reported as saying: "It was like walking into a mob scene."



Musk, who found Giuliani 'surrounded by goons'

Giuliani "was surrounded by goonish confidantes, he didn't have any idea whatsoever about Silicon Valley, but he and his henchmen were eager to line their pockets". The biography notes: "They asked for 10% of the company, and that was the end of the meeting. 'This guy occupies a different planet', Musk told Moritz."

After leaving city hall, Giuliani succeeded in making millions as a lawyer, consultant and paid speaker. That picture has also changed. The former mayor, faced with soaring legal costs from his work for Trump and other cases, including a $10m (£8m) lawsuit from a former associate who alleges sexual assault, is struggling to pay his bills, his lawyers have said. In New York, Giuliani's luxury apartment has been put up for sale.

US explorer who fell ill deep in Turkish cave brought back to surface

Luke Harding

A US explorer has been rescued from a Turkish cave more than a week after he fell seriously ill, in an unprecedented operation he described as a "crazy, crazy adventure".

Mark Dickey, 40, developed serious stomach problems on 2 September when he was more than 1,000 metres (3,300ft) underground. He was exploring the Morca cave, a remote complex of narrow tunnels in the Taurus mountains of southern Turkey.

An international effort to bring him to the surface began on Saturday afternoon. He was moved on a stretcher through tight passages dripping with water. There were stops at camps along the way, with Dickey given rest and medical treatment.

It was a perilous operation as the rescue team made its way through dark subterranean chambers, amid chilly temperatures of 4-6C (39-43F). Turkey's caving federation said he finally emerged at 12.37am local time yesterday. Footage showed Dickey being brought to the surface, bound tightly to a rescue stretcher.

"It is amazing to be above ground again," he told reporters and friends who greeted him outside the cave. He admitted: "I was underground for far longer than ever expected."

He thanked the Turkish government for saving his life with its rapid response, as well as the international caving community, Turkish cavers and the Hungarian Cave Rescue Service, among others.

Dickey appeared in good spirits. "This is a first," he said as the small crowd gathered around him laughed. He echoed the reply of someone nearby, agreeing that he should "make it a last" as well, the Washington Post reported. A helicopter then took him to a regional hospital.

Turkey's cave federation said: "The cave rescue part of the operation has ended successfully. We congratulate all those who have contributed."



▲ *Mark Dickey emerges from the Morca cave early yesterday after a complex rescue operation involving about 190 experts* PHOTOGRAPH: MERT GOKHAN KOC/DIA/AP

The Morca cave is Turkey's third-deepest, with its lowest point about 0.8 miles below ground. Dickey and several others on the expedition were mapping the cave system for the Anatolian Speleology Group Association.

Dickey fell ill at a depth of 1,120 metres, prompting what organisers said was one of the largest and most complicated underground rescue operations ever mounted.

The American was first treated inside the cave by a Hungarian doctor who went down the system on 3 September. Doctors and rescuers then took turns caring for him. The cause of Dickey's illness was not clear.

Yesterday, he said that in the cave he had started to throw up a lot of blood. "My consciousness started to get harder to hold on to, and I reached the point where I thought: I'm not going to live," he told reporters.

The biggest challenges for the rescuers were getting him up the vertical sections of the cave and through mud and water at low temperatures in the horizontal sections. About 190 experts from Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Turkey took part, including doctors, paramedics and cavers. Teams comprising a doctor and three or four other rescuers took turns staying by his side.

The rescue began on Saturday after doctors, who administered IV fluids and blood, determined that Dickey could make the arduous ascent.

Before the evacuation could begin rescuers had to widen some of the narrow passages, install ropes to pull him up vertical shafts on a stretcher and set up temporary camps.

Dickey became ill on 2 September, but it took until the next morning to notify people above ground.

The European Cave Rescue Association (Ecra) expressed its "huge gratitude" to the many rescuers who had contributed to the success of the operation. Earlier, it had said that Dickey was a "well-known figure in the international speleological community, a highly trained caver, and a cave rescuer himself."

Dickey's parents said they were filled with "incredible joy" at the news of his rescue.

Additional reporting
Agence France-Presse
Associated Press



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Zimbabwe president accused of creating family dynasty

Nyasha Chingono
Harare

The Zimbabwean president, Emmerson Mnangagwa, recently returned to power after a disputed election, has been accused by the opposition of attempting to create a family dynasty after appointing his son deputy finance minister barely a week on from conferring his wife with an honorary doctorate.

Announcing his new cabinet on Monday, Mnangagwa said one of his younger sons, David Kudakwashe Mnangagwa, would be second in charge at the Treasury, and he appointed a nephew, Tongai, as deputy minister in the tourism minstry.

David Mnangagwa, who has no experience in government, is an actuary who previously was on the board of a bank. He will deputise for Mhuli Ncube, who was reappointed after losing his parliamentary seat.

The 34-year-old Mnangagwa, who also graduated with a law degree last week at the University of Zimbabwe, came into parliament through a youth quota designed to increase young people's representation. Members are handpicked by their party.

Irate Zimbabweans and the opposition condemned the appointments on social media, saying the president was creating a family dynasty after the disputed election this year.

The opposition called the vote result a "gigantic fraud", while the Southern African Development Community, and an EU election observation mission said that the country's elections, which were held in August, had fallen short of international standards.

Fadzayi Mahere, spokesperson for the opposition Citizens Coalition for Change, accused Mnangagwa of nepotism. "[The] cabinet announcements demonstrate beyond any doubt that he's thrown out any pretence of reform or adherence to good governance out of the window," Mahere said on X.

Citizens Coalition for Change said in a statement that the appointment of Mnangagwa's son was "worrying".

Hopewell Chin'ono, a Zimbabwean journalist commented: "Robert Mugabe must be laughing hard at us! The joke is really on us citizens."

26
Cabinet members announced by Mnangagwa recently, an increase from the previous total of 22

Mnangagwa has been criticised, too for announcing a bloated cabinet, increasing ministers from 22 to 26. Political analysts say the 80-year-old is accommodating close family members and allies to consolidate power in his second and final term.

Mnangagwa has also drawn widespread criticism for reappointing underperforming ministers, such as the former Olympic gold medalist Kirsty Coventry. Under Coventry, Zimbabwe football was banned by Fifa while its stadiums were condemned for failing to meet standards.

The president said people who were not happy with his choice of ministers should appoint their own. "I have reappointed [Coventry] because I am happy with her performance. Whoever was not impressed by her can appoint someone else when they become president," he told journalists.

Mnangagwa also reappointed Kembo Mohadi as his second deputy. Mohadi had been forced to resign two years ago after a sexual scandal.



Bad hair day
A model wears one of several unusual designs by Anna Roth during New York fashion week 2023 at Brooklyn Museum, New York.

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN LAMPARSKI/ GETTY IMAGES

US unfreezes Iranian funds in deal allowing prisoner swap

Julian Borger
Washington

The US has issued a waiver to allow the transfer of $6bn (£4.8bn) in frozen Iranian funds from South Korea to Qatar as part of a deal to free five Americans detained in Iran.

The waiver was a necessary step towards advancing a previously announced deal, which also involves the freeing of five Iranian citizens imprisoned in the US, mostly for sanctions-busting offences.

The waiver allowing international banks to transfer the Iranian funds was signed by the secretary of state, Antony Blinken, on Friday, and Congress was informed on Monday.

Under the deal, the money, frozen revenues from past Iranian oil sales, will be sent to Qatar's central bank, from where it can be disbursed for the purchase of humanitarian goods for Iran.

Four of the US nationals held by Iran were moved from jail to house arrest last month. The fifth detainee was already under house arrest.

Adrienne Watson, the spokesperson for the US National Security Council, said: "While this is a step in the process, no individuals have been or will be released into US custody this week."

The US detainees include Siamak Namazi, a 51-year-old Iranian-American, who was detained in 2015 while he was visiting his parents and sentenced to 10 years in jail for supposedly collaborating with a foreign government; Emad Sharghi, a 58-year-old sentenced in 2020 to 10 years in prison on spying charges while travelling around the country with his wife; and Morad Tahbaz, 68, a UK-born businessman jailed for 10 years on charges of "contacts with the US government." The two other US detainees have not been identified.

The charges against the detainees have been vague, and the trials were often conducted without lawyers. Sometimes defendants were not allowed to attend their trials.

Sina Azodi, a lecturer on international affairs at George Washington University, said: "These are five US detainees who have been held unjustly for years and they finally get to reunite with their families. At the same time, Iran gets access to its own money. It's not coming from taxpayers' money, so in a sense the US is getting its hostages for free."

"Iran gets access to its own money for purposes that should have been exempt from sanctions regardless, because US law provides for exemptions for food and medicine. So it's a good deal for everybody."

Philippine Nobel laureate acquitted of 'political' tax evasion charge

Agence France-Presse
Manila

The Philippine Nobel laureate Maria Ressa has been acquitted of her final tax evasion charge in the latest legal victory for the veteran journalist as she battles cases that she has previously described as part of a pattern of harassment.

Ressa, 59, who won a Nobel peace prize in 2021, has spent years fighting multiple charges filed during Rodrigo Duterte's 2016-22 reign as president.

Ressa, a vocal critic of Duterte and his deadly drug war, has long maintained that the cases against her and the news website Rappler, which she cofounded in 2012, were politically motivated. "You gotta have faith," Ressa told reporters outside the court after the acquittal.

Ressa and Rappler had faced five charges of tax evasion stemming from the 2015 sale of Philippine depositary receipts – a method of raising money from foreign investors. A court acquitted them on four charges in January. The fifth charge was heard by a different court, which cleared them yesterday. Ressa said the latest acquittal "shows the court system works and we hope to see the remaining charges dismissed".

Despite the acquittals, Ressa and Rappler face an uncertain future as they battle another two court cases. Ressa and a former colleague Rey Santos Jr are appealing against a cyber libel conviction that carries a nearly seven-year jail sentence.

The case arises from a 2015 investment by the US-based Omidyar Network, established by the eBay founder Pierre Omidyar. It later transferred its Rappler investment to the site's local managers to stymie efforts to shut it down.

Ressa and Rappler's legal troubles began in 2016 with the election of Duterte, known for foul-mouthed attacks on his critics. Duterte's government claimed it had nothing to do with any of the cases against Ressa.

Ressa, who is also a US citizen, has stayed in the Philippines. She is on bail pending an appeal against her cyber libel conviction and must apply for court permission to travel abroad.

She and the Russian journalist Dmitry Muratov were jointly awarded the Nobel for their efforts to "safeguard freedom of expression".



▲ *Ressa has beaten five tax evasion charges but faces more court fights*

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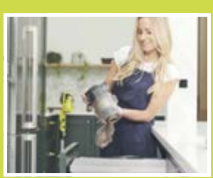
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RYOBI

New Zealand Capital divided as Jackson's land purchase thwarts developers' plans

Charlotte Graham-McLay
Wellington

As news spread on the Miramar peninsula that the film-maker Peter Jackson and his partner, Fran Walsh, had halted a NZ$500m (£240m) housing development by buying the land on which it was to be built, residents of the seaside suburb were joyous.

"It's fantastic," said Dan Stickley, a local resident, at a supermarket in Miramar. It mattered that it was Jackson - whose sprawling film-making enclave powers the sleepy suburb - who bought the land, he added: "He's one of us."

Local Facebook pages praised the pair's pledge to restore the proposed site to nature. Plans were made to gather messages of gratitude on a card. A short drive from the proposed site, someone had painted "thank you Fran & Peter" on the side of a block of flats in red cursive letters eight feet high.

The end to the development at Shelly Bay - a sparkling stretch of coast five miles from the city centre that was once a defence base - draws a line under a dispute that had divided residents of New Zealand's capital since 2014, prompting debates about the sluggish pace of change in a city gripped by an acute housing shortage. Shelly Bay would have seen 350 houses built, against a shortage in the city of at least 10,000 units.

Rebecca Matthews, a Wellington city councillor, said: "We face a culture where our city will search for reasons to stop that housing development."

In 2019, Jackson denounced Wellington city council for "doing anything they can to assist a private developer" intending to build "on a beautiful part of Wellington's coastline". The film-maker's companies contributed NZ$30,000 to a mayoral campaign in 2019 by a candidate who opposed the plan.

In a statement announcing the land purchase, Jackson and Walsh said they planned to restore "the natural beauty of the bay", adding that landscaping would begin soon and they would not develop the site beyond restoring two existing buildings. They did not say how much they had paid for the land.


'He's one of us …' Peter Jackson

On the streets of Miramar, it was difficult to find anyone who did not side with Jackson. "The traffic would've been a nightmare," said one resident, Barbara Hiri.

Aaron Cowan, who moved to the area to work at one of Jackson's visual effects companies, called the development "a disaster". "There's no access to it, no infrastructure," he said. "You couldn't fit that many people in that area."

But outside the suburb, the issue has been polarising. Matthews, the city councillor, said: "Of all of the myriad of complex issues and history that are part of the Shelly Bay story, there is also the significant influence of nimbyism."

Questions remain over how the land will be used. Paul Eagle, the member of parliament for Rongotai, which covers Miramar, urged Jackson, Walsh and the city council to open discussions on how the pair would use the land they own, which includes other properties worth tens of millions of dollars on the peninsula.

"My plea to Sir Peter and Fran is that we need you around the table as part of the city vision," said Eagle, who was a city councillor from 2010 until 2017, and will leave his parliamentary seat at the upcoming general election, which takes place on 14 October.

It is not known what involvement the Māori *iwi* (tribes) who sold their land to the property developer might have in the site's future use. The Māori, Shelly Bay's settlers before European colonisation, had bought the land back after its use by the military.

Neither the iwi organisation that supported the development, nor the group that opposed it, which also included iwi members, responded to requests for comment. The latter group staged a two-year occupation of the site until 2022, and were challenging the sale to the developer in court.

The developer, Ian Cassels, made a joint statement with Jackson and Walsh, speaking of "deeply mixed emotions" about the project's end.

Meanwhile, many in Wellington remain frustrated by a lack of progress on tackling the city's housing shortage. Eagle said that while the Shelly Bay purchase might be "a win for conservation and locals", it failed to address the affordable housing problem in Wellington, "which remains at crisis levels".

Tory Whanau, Wellington's mayor, who learned of the Jackson deal the day it was announced to the public, said she was "incredibly surprised" at the news. "I was looking forward to seeing an increase in affordable housing with this development," Whanau said.

Matthews said Wellington "lacks very many ideal or easy places to build houses … the view of a lot of the pro-housing voices on our council is that we want to take more of an enabling approach."

Georgina Campbell, a reporter for the New Zealand Herald and a Miramar resident, said the Shelly Bay dispute was emblematic of a wider problem in Wellington, which is marked by quake-prone buildings and crumbling sewage and transport infrastructure - as well as an "incredibly, fiercely strong resistance" to change.



▶ *Shelly Bay would be restored as a site for nature, the film-maker said*
PHOTOGRAPH: FELIX DESMARAIS/STUFF

350
Housing units proposed for the site, a former military base. The plans have been at the centre of a high-profile dispute for nearly a decade

10k
Estimated shortage of housing units in Wellington, which, like other New Zealand cities, has seen house prices soar over the past decade

Australian MP alleges sexual harassment by male colleague

Paul Karp

An Australian MP has alleged that a male colleague "used to breathe on the back of [her] neck" in parliament and subject her to innuendo about "thrusting and probing" questions.

Karen Andrews, a Liberal MP and former home affairs minister, described the alleged conduct in an interview with ABC.

Asked if she had been subjected to sexual harassment, Andrews replied: "I did have one of my male colleagues who used to breathe on the back of my neck in question time.

"Yes, breathe. I'd just be sitting there minding my own business and I would have the back of my neck breathed on. And if I asked a question, it would be, 'that was a great question - thrusting and probing' and, you know, that sort of stuff."

The Labor frontbench MP Julie Collins has denounced the "appalling" incident. Andrews said the comments were not funny but "there would be people that would say: 'Can't you take a joke?'"

She said she sometimes called out such behaviour but "sometimes I just go, 'I can't, I can't be in every fight'".

It is unclear whether Andrews made a complaint about the conduct - which allegedly occurred in the House of Representatives - to the Liberal party leadership, parliament or other complaints processes.

Andrews was elected to the lower house in 2010 and served as a cabinet member from 2018 to 2022.

In April she quit the shadow frontbench and announced she would retire at the next election.

Collins, Labor's housing minister, said she was not aware of the alleged conduct but was "very sorry that that has happened".

"It shouldn't happen to anybody in any Australian workplace," she told ABC. "And the Australian parliament should be setting the [standard].

"We need better from everybody that works in that building. And that's why we're so determined to improve the conditions for the people that work in the Parliament House. But we shouldn't have that type of behaviour. That is just appalling."

> *'There'd be people who would say "can't you take a joke?"'*
>
> **Karen Andrews**
> *Australian Liberal MP*

Simon Birmingham, the Liberal senate leader, said it was the first he had heard of Andrews' complaint.

"I, first and foremost, urge people across the parliament to use appropriate processes," he told reporters.

"If there are issues that people need to discuss with the leadership within their own parties or otherwise, of course, they should feel free to do that as well."

Birmingham said the parliamentary workplace support service "has been established to provide for an independent, impartial, credible and confidential process for any improper actions that occur".

Business

Rate-setters face dilemma as pay rises hit record rate, but unemployment grows

Larry Elliott
Economics editor

Pay packets are rising at a record rate despite increasing unemployment and a marked cooling of the UK's labour market, the latest official figures shows.

The Office for National Statistics said total earnings in the three months to July 2023 were 8.5% higher than in the same period a year earlier - the highest since modern records began in 2001 other than during the exceptional conditions of the pandemic.

The ONS said the earnings figures were affected by one-off payments to NHS staff and civil servants but that real pay - adjusted for inflation - rose at an annual rate of 1.2%.

Over the same three-month period, unemployment rose by 159,000, the unemployment rate rose by 0.5 percentage points to 4.3%, employment dropped by 207,000 and the number of job vacancies dipped below the 1m level for the first time in two years.

The contrast between the strength of pay and the rest of the official labour market data will add to the Bank of England's dilemma over whether to raise interest rates for a 15th successive time next week.

The jobs and earnings figures are one of the last vital pieces of economic news for the Bank of England before September's decision on borrowing costs.

Threadneedle Street has been looking for evidence that the pace of pay settlements is abating but is also aware that previous increases in the cost of borrowing are having an impact on growth and employment.

Annual average earnings in the three months to July are also used to calculate the increase in pensions. Under the triple lock, the state pension rises in line with whichever is higher of earnings, prices or 2.5%.

A breakdown of the pay data showed annual earnings in the private sector grew by 7.6% in the quarter ending in July, while earnings in the public sector rose by 12.2%. Regular pay, which excludes bonuses, grew at an unchanged rate of 7.8%.

The chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, said: "It's heartening to see the number of employees on payroll is still close to record highs and that our unemployment rate remains below many of our international peers.

"Wage growth remains high, partly reflecting one-off payments to public sector workers, but for real wages to grow sustainably we must stick to our plan to halve inflation."

8.5%
Increase in total earnings in the three months to July 2023 from the same period a year earlier

Darren Morgan, the ONS director of economic statistics, said: "Earnings in cash terms continue to increase, at a record rate outside the pandemic-affected period. Coupled with lower inflation, this means people's real pay is no longer falling.

"Unemployment continues to increase in the latest three months. Correspondingly, employment is down, driven by falls among men and the self-employed. The proportion of people neither working nor looking for a job is slightly up, with more students, as well as the long-term sick reaching yet another record.

"Meanwhile, working days lost to strikes jumped in July, especially in education, with the health sector also still heavily affected. However, the overall number is still below what it was a few months ago.

"Job vacancies have fallen below the million mark for the first time since the summer of 2021, when the reopening of economy created huge demand for workers. However, they still remain significantly above pre-Covid levels."



▶ *Petticoat Lane market in London's East End. Job vacancies fell below a million for the first time in two years*
PHOTOGRAPH: HENRY NICHOLLS/AFP/GETTY

Analysis
Phillip Inman



Bank of England almost certain to dish out more medicine - but businesses warn of an overdose

The time to stop raising interest rates is now, say business lobby groups fearful of the negative impact another rise in the cost of borrowing will have on their members - after the latest jobs figures showed pay rises, including bonuses, rocketing to 8.5% a year.

Salaries have risen this year in response to rising inflation, and remained stubbornly high despite 14 consecutive interest-rate rises by the Bank of England.

When the Bank's monetary policy committee meets next week, the pressure will be intense on its nine members to act again or risk further pay increases, sending inflation higher next year.

Some Bank officials - those who, like the governor, Andrew Bailey, have signalled the end of the hiking cycle - will have hoped pay ticked down to show the medicine is working so far and the patient can escape without further treatment. However, the measure of pay that excludes bonuses stuck at 7.8% in the three months from May to July, the same as the three months to June.

A respite from further interest rate rises is certainly what the Institute of Directors wants. Kitty Ussher, its chief economist, said that although wage inflation "still feels high," there were special factors that had stopped it falling in line with recent declines in inflation.

She pointed to the spike in public sector deals that have sent pay rises, including bonuses, across Whitehall, the NHS and the rest of the public services to a record high of 12.2%.

More emphasis should be put on regular pay in the public sector, which is much lower at 6.6%, and below the July inflation rate of 6.8%.

She added: "Private sector pay wage pressure, although also high, has grown at a lower rate in recent months and is likely to fall further as the labour market loosens and the headline rate of inflation comes down."

The IoD's surveys show the Bank's large, half-a-point interest rate rise in June "led to a worsening in the way that business leaders considered the outlook for the economy".

'Private sector pay wage pressure, although also high, has grown at a lower rate in recent months and is likely to fall further'



Kitty Ussher
Bank chief economist

Yael Selfin, the chief economist at KPMG, said the labour market was showing clear signs of weakening as the economy slowed in response to interest rate rises. Like most economists, she said the pay figures meant a quarter-point increase next week was inevitable, but argued there would be little to support further rises.

"The labour market is starting to feel the weight of slowing activity," she said, highlighting how the unemployment rate rose to 4.3%, vacancies were down below 1m, and job-to-job flows moderated, suggesting that workers were less confident when they considered moving to another employer.

Businesses fear that when the downturn comes - the one the Bank wants in order to slow rising wages and inflation - it will be an unstoppable recession, a hard landing that has been avoided so far in the US but appears to be heading for the UK.

FTSE 100	All share	Dow Indl	Nikkei 225	£/€	£/$
+30.66	+14.74	+88.44	+308.61	1.1636	1.2466
7527.53	4097.97	34752.16	32776.37	-0.0023	-0.0062



Poundland move to buy 71 Wilko sites gives some hope for jobs

Mark Sweney

Poundland is to acquire up to 71 Wilko sites that it intends to reopen under its own brand in a deal that could throw a lifeline to some of the about 1,800 staff who will lose their jobs.

Under the deal struck by administrators PwC with Poundland's parent company Pepco, the sites will be acquired only after all 408 Wilko stores are shut and more than 12,000 staff made redundant.

PwC indicated Wilko employees would be offered the opportunity to work at the new Poundland branches, although it is not clear how many roles will be made available.

Last week, PwC announced a £13m agreement with discount retailer B&M to buy up to 51 Wilko properties that will also be rebranded in a deal that did not include a jobs guarantee.

"Alongside the previously announced agreement with B&M, we're confident this sale will create a platform for future employment opportunities for people including current Wilko team members at up to 122 locations," said Edward Williams, joint administrator at PwC. "We will continue to engage with other retailers around any interest in other Wilko sites and are confident of completing a sale of the brand and intellectual property within the coming days."

The Pepco and B&M deals involve shops which employ 3,200 Wilko staff in total.

On Monday, PwC said that all of Wilko's stores are to close by early October with the loss of more than 12,000 jobs after talks with potential buyers failed to deliver a rescue deal.

Wilko's two big warehouses, in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, and Newport, Wales, where 299 jobs have already gone, are scheduled to close on Friday. Last week, PwC announced the closure of a first wave of 52 Wilko stores and the loss of more than 1,300 staff, including support centre workers and warehouse staff, but continued talks with prospective buyers.

The statement on the closure of the whole estate came hours after it emerged that a rescue deal proposed by the owner of HMV that would have saved about half of Wilko's sites and secured the future of thousands of jobs had collapsed.

Doug Putman, who engineered a turnaround of HMV in the UK and owns Toys R Us in Canada, had been negotiating to save as many as 200 of Wilko's 408 stores, throwing a lifeline to its more than 12,000 staff.

PwC is still in talks with the discount retailer The Range which is seeking a deal for the Wilko brand.

Wilko, which was founded in 1930 when JK Wilkinson opened his first store in Leicester, took over stores left empty when Woolworths collapsed in 2008.

> *'We are confident of completing a sale of the brand and intellectual property'*
>
> **Edward Williams**
> *Joint administrator*

'Terrifying' 13% rise in mortgage arrears as high interest rates bite

Phillip Inman

Mortgage arrears jumped by 13% in the second quarter of the year to the highest level since 2016, according to Bank of England figures.

Rising interest rates and unemployment over recent months have put pressure on disposable incomes, forcing some families to cut or suspend their mortgage payments.

Buy-to-let mortgage payers have also come under pressure in parts of the country where tenants are struggling with the cost of living crisis.

The Bank said mortgage arrears rose to £16.9bn, up by 29% on the previous year and the highest since the third quarter of 2016.

Mortgage arrears are based on figures showing the number of borrowers failing to make payments equivalent to at least 1.5% of the outstanding mortgage balance or where the property is in possession.

Mortgage lending was also hit in the second quarter with gross advances falling by £6.3bn to £52.4bn. Year on year, mortgage lending slumped to the lowest level since the worst of the Covid-19 collapse in lending in the second quarter of 2020.

Lewis Shaw, founder of Mansfield-based Shaw Financial Services, told the news agency Newspage that a "mortgage meltdown" is approaching unless the Bank changes its approach.

Shaw said: "The speed at which mortgage arrears are increasing is terrifying and should give cause to pause at the next Bank of England interest rate meeting. This is dire data, and we know that it's about to get an awful lot worse with 1.6 million mortgage holders due to renew over the next 12 months at significantly higher rates than anyone has been used to for well over a decade."

Simon Gammon, managing partner at the finance arm of estate agents Knight Frank, said the proportion of mortgage payers falling behind with payments remained low at 1% despite the "sizeable jump in arrears".

However, while homeowners were more likely to make cuts to other spending before falling behind with mortgage payments, this wasn't the case for buy-to-let landlords, he said.

"If a landlord finds their mortgage is no longer affordable, or the rent no longer covers their outgoings, they only have two choices – sell or default. If they opt to sell, they may have to wait up to a year for the tenancy to end, unless they are willing to sell with a tenancy in place, which is more difficult." The Bank is expected to raise interest rates by a quarter point to 5.5% on 21 September, raising the average mortgage payments by £3,000 a year for a household that refinances a two-year fixed product.

'Beginning of the end' of fossil fuel era, says energy watchdog

Jillian Ambrose
Energy correspondent

The world's demand for oil, gas and coal will begin to decline this decade in "the beginning of the end" of the fossil fuel era, according to the global energy watchdog.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has projected for the first time that fossil fuel consumption will peak before 2030 and fall into permanent decline as climate policies take effect.

However, the forecast downturn is still "nowhere near steep enough" to put the world on a path to limiting temperature rises to 1.5C above pre-industrialised levels, which is considered crucial to avoiding a climate catastrophe.

The IEA's influential energy outlook report, due next month, will show that oil, gas and coal are on course to hit a peak this decade under existing climate policies, earlier than many have anticipated.

Fatih Birol, the executive director of the IEA, wrote in the Financial Times that the projections would show that "the world is on the cusp of a historic turning point".

"Peaks for the three fossil fuels are welcome, showing that the shift to cleaner and more secure energy is speeding up and that efforts to avoid the worst effects of climate change are making headway," he wrote.

Birol said the sooner-than-expected peak was primarily driven by "the spectacular growth" of clean energy, including solar panels and electric vehicles. He also pointed to structural shifts in China's economy – away from energy-intensive heavy industries – and Europe's hastened transition away from gas after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.


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NILFISK

Unhappy hour: pub group to charge more at busy times

Rob Davies

A pint of beer during the busiest periods will cost drinkers 20p more under a "dynamic pricing" system introduced by Britain's largest pub group.

Stonegate Group, which owns chains including Slug & Lettuce and Yates's, said it was raising prices at 800 of its venues during peak times, such as weekends, to help cover soaring costs.

It has previously done so during one-off events, such as World Cups, but has now introduced price variance on a more regular basis. Patrons have been told of the change with a "polite notice" in Stonegate pubs, informing them of the need to raise prices to cover extra staffing costs, more bouncers, extra cleaning, washing glasses and "complying with licensing requirements".

Dynamic pricing, often known as surge pricing, is a common feature of other industries, such as aviation, where airlines charge more for tickets during the school holidays.

Uber also uses the feature when demand is high. Dynamic pricing is a common practice among sports or gig ticket companies in the US, although it is more rare in the UK.

It has proved controversial at times, with some Bruce Springsteen fans reacting with dismay when dynamic pricing was applied to some tickets on his latest tour.

A spokesperson for Stonegate, which has 4,500 venues, told the Daily Telegraph: "Across the managed business our dynamic pricing encompasses the ability to offer guests a range of promotions including happy hours, two-for-one cocktails, and discounts on food and drink products at different times on different days throughout the week.

"This flexibility may mean that on occasions pricing may marginally increase in selective pubs and bars due to the increased cost demands on the business with additional staffing or licensing requirements such as additional door team members."

The chief executive of another of Britain's big pub chains, who asked not to be named, said the practice was not unusual and had been "going on for decades" in the largest venues, during events and busy periods.



Barbie T-shirts and co-ords, sliders and cargo shorts have sold well

Primark basks in Barbie's rosy glow as profits rise

Julia Kollewe

The owner of Primark said its full-year profits would be higher than expected, helped by strong sales of Barbie T-shirts, cargo shorts and boho dresses, as well as price increases.

Associated British Foods, the company behind the budget clothing chain, said cargo shorts, linen blend T-shirts and sliders, as well as boho and paisley dresses and Moroccan-inspired matching outfits for all the family had been popular over the summer.

The black Barbie men's T-shirt was the top searched item on the Primark website over the summer, as the Barbie movie became a hit at the box office. Makeup and moisturisers also sold well.

"It's been a good summer; the products have continued to hold up really well," said the ABF chief financial officer, Eoin Tonge. Tourists and day trippers have been coming back to London and other big cities such as Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham, and numbers are close to pre-pandemic levels, which meant Primark's big stores were busier.

In Britain, like-for-like sales at Primark increased by 7% in the past three months despite heavy rainfall, while its stores in southern Europe suffered during record-hot temperatures.

Primark had announced 7% price rises for this summer and there were some slightly higher increases still to come in the autumn and winter, Tonge said.

Looking at the whole sector, he said he expected clothing prices on the high street to be roughly stable next year and said shoppers should not expect big decreases, because retailers are seeking to rebuild their profit margins.

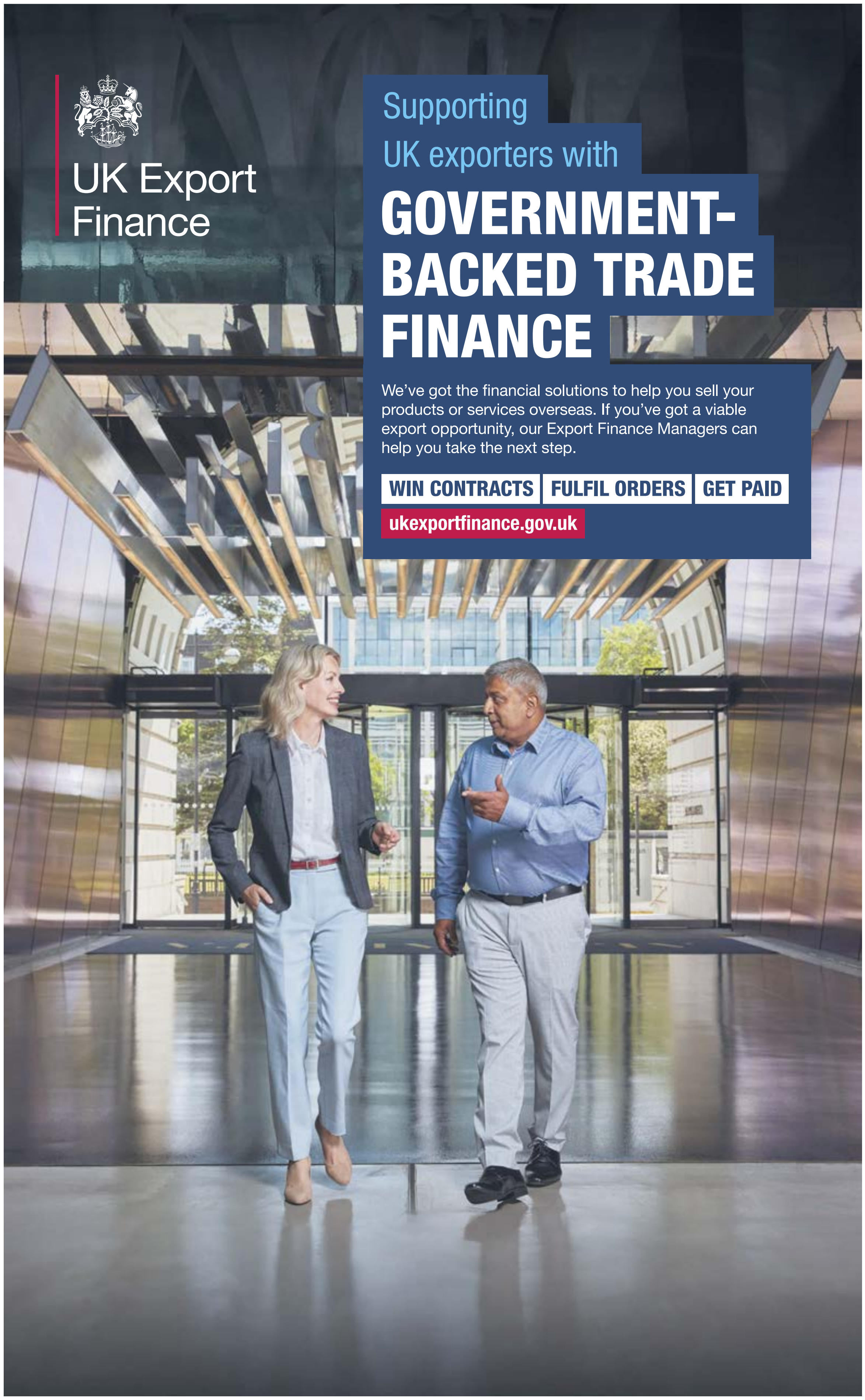
Primark's like-for-like sales rose by 9% across all countries to £9bn in the year to 16 September. Along with strong food sales, the group slightly exceeded its forecasts last year for adjusted operating profit of £1.4bn.

ABF also produces sugar and makes food brands such as Twinings tea, Ovaltine and Patak's curry products. Its grocery business traded above expectations.

The group's profit margins are rising again as costs for materials and freight have eased and the dollar has weakened. Primark has also pushed through "selective price increases".

At the same time, it cut prices on some children's clothing, including long-sleeve T-shirts, zip-up hoodies and leggings for autumn and winter as well as some baby outfits.

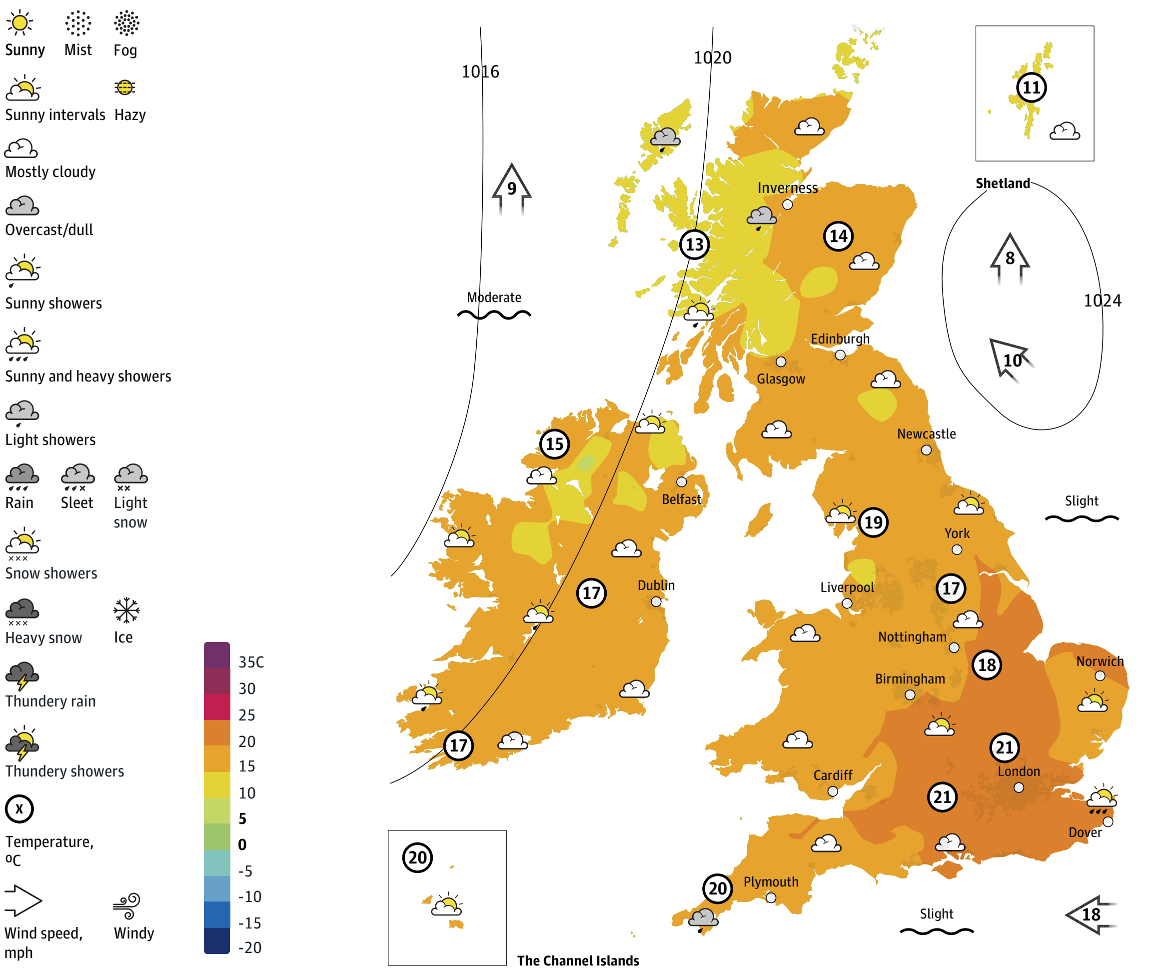
Primark's UK trial of click and collect services, which lets shoppers order online and then pick up their orders at high street stores, in north-west England and Greater London has been extended from childrenswear to womenswear. Total full-year sales are forecast to be 15% ahead of last year, with the UK contributing 11% growth and Europe 18%.



Weather

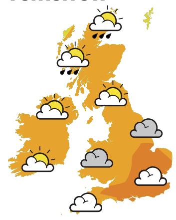
Wednesday 13 September 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

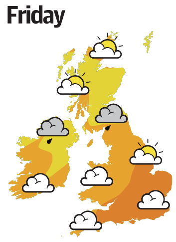


Forecast

Low 13 High 17
Tomorrow



Low 13 High 18
Friday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

Latest	
08 Sep 2023	418.58
Weekly average	
03 Sep 2023	418.64
12 Sep 2022	416.27
12 Sep 2013	393.92
Pre-industrial base	*280*
Safe level	*350*

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs	Precipitation	Air pollution
London	13 / 21	5%	Low
Manchester	13 / 18	10%	Low
Edinburgh	12 / 16	25%	Low
Belfast	12 / 15	85%	Low
Birmingham	12 / 19	5%	Low
Brighton	14 / 21	10%	Low
Bristol	13 / 19	25%	Low
Cardiff	13 / 19	5%	Low
Newcastle	11 / 16	25%	Low
Penzance	14 / 19	25%	Low

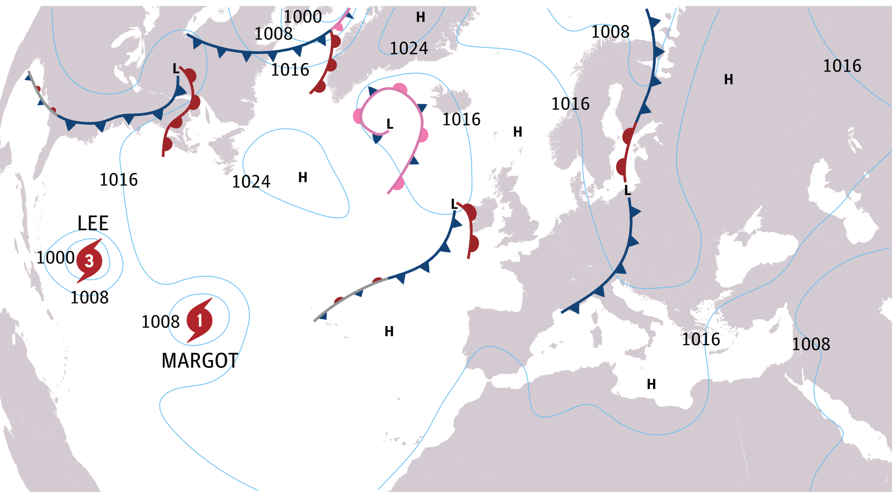
Atlantic front

Cold front

Warm front

Occluded front

Trough



High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	**0117**	3.9m	**1348**	3.9m
Avonmouth	**0709**	11.6m	**1926**	12.2m
Barrow	**1137**	8.2m	**2347**	8.7m
Belfast	**1128**	3.1m	**2332**	3.4m
Cobh	**0524**	3.7m	**1746**	3.8m
Cromer	**0629**	4.7m	**1903**	4.5m
Dover	**1123**	6.3m	**2347**	6.2m
Dublin	**1156**	3.6m	**2357**	3.9m
Galway	**0524**	4.5m	**1734**	4.7m
Greenock	**0011**	3.3m	**1256**	3.1m
Harwich	**--**	--	**1148**	3.8m
Holyhead	**1039**	5.0m	**2245**	5.3m
Hull	**0609**	6.8m	**1843**	6.7m
Leith	**0240**	5.1m	**1504**	5.1m
Liverpool	**1123**	8.4m	**2332**	8.8m
London Bridge	**0146**	6.5m	**1406**	6.4m
Lossiemouth	**--**	--	**1214**	3.7m
Milford Haven	**0621**	6.2m	**1835**	6.5m
Newquay	**0513**	6.2m	**1727**	6.5m
North Shields	**0325**	4.7m	**1553**	4.6m
Oban	**0601**	3.5m	**1805**	3.7m
Penzance	**0446**	4.9m	**1700**	5.2m
Plymouth	**0541**	4.8m	**1752**	5.2m
Portsmouth	**1140**	4.4m	**2343**	4.3m
Southport	**1058**	8.1m	**2307**	8.5m
Stornoway	**0708**	4.2m	**1915**	4.6m
Weymouth	**0617**	0.8m	**1820**	1.0m
Whitby	**0358**	5.2m	**1625**	5.1m
Wick	**1138**	3.1m	**2342**	3.3m
Workington	**1147**	7.4m	**2357**	7.8m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0631
Sun sets	1920
Moon rises	0419
Moon sets	1914
New Moon	15 Sept

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	1947 to 0655
Birm'ham	1928 to 0639
Brighton	1920 to 0634
Bristol	1931 to 0644
Carlisle	1934 to 0641
Cork	1954 to 0706
Dublin	1947 to 0656
Glasgow	1941 to 0647
Harlech	1937 to 0648
Inverness	1942 to 0644
London	1920 to 0633
M'chester	1930 to 0640
Newcastle	1930 to 0637
Norwich	1916 to 0627
Penzance	1941 to 0656

Birdwatch

It was the bird's distinctive movement that made me take a second look. Small and pale, with narrow, swept-back wings and a buoyant flight - reminding me, in the words of the writer Simon Barnes, of a gull that's died and gone to heaven. A glance through my binoculars, and its black crown, white forehead and custard-yellow bill confirmed that it was a little tern - the smallest of its family, and only the third individual I had ever seen in Somerset. The bird paused in mid-air, twisted its wings, and plunged into the murky waters of the River Parrett, emerging with a small fish before flying south upriver and out of sight.

It had already been a rewarding morning, with a steady stream of swallows and sand martins, also heading south. A good selection of other early autumn passage migrants, too: two common sandpipers and at least half a dozen wheatears. Best of all, a score of yellow wagtails - not the canary-coloured adults but rather drab-looking juveniles - bouncing around on the grassy area by the sea wall. In just a few weeks, they will be feeding alongside big game in sub-Saharan Africa - also the winter destination of the little tern.
Stephen Moss *@stephenmoss_tv*

Around the world

Algiers	30	Lisbon	29
Ams'dam	19	Madrid	28
Athens	30	Malaga	28
Auckland	16	Melb'rne	24
B Aires	16	Mexico C	27
Bangkok	32	Miami	34
Barcelona	26	Milan	27
Basra	48	Mombasa	30
Beijing	26	Moscow	19
Berlin	21	Mumbai	32
Bermuda	30	N Orleans	33
Brussels	19	Nairobi	25
Budapest	30	New Delhi	33
C'hagen	17	New York	24
Cairo	32	Oslo	18
Cape Town	20	Paris	23
Chicago	18	Perth	18
Corfu	30	Prague	24
Dakar	33	Reykjavik	11
Dhaka	33	Rio de J	30
Dublin	16	Rome	28
Florence	30	Shanghai	31
Gibraltar	26	Singapore	32
H Kong	31	Stockh'm	14
Harare	23	Strasb'g	23
Helsinki	20	Sydney	22
Istanbul	27	Tel Aviv	31
Jo'burg	18	Tenerife	30
K Lumpur	35	Tokyo	31
K'mandu	32	Toronto	19
Kabul	33	Vancouv'r	18
Kingston	35	Vienna	28
Kolkata	33	Warsaw	30
L Angeles	27	Wash'ton	27
Lagos	29	Well'ton	15
Lima	22	Zurich	21

Rugby World Cup

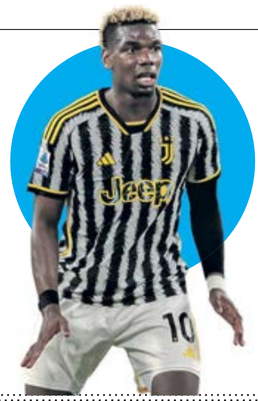
Lifting the lid on England's fitness masterplan

Page 38 →

Football

Jonathan Wilson on the sad decline of Paul Pogba

Page 40 →



Sport

David Squires on ... James Maddison, the main man at a roast dinner



David Squires archive **Peruse our resident cartoonist's previous work at** *theguardian.com/profile/david-squires*

Tennis

Murray keen to help Britain right Davis Cup wrongs

Tumaini Carayol

One week since a positive showing in the first week of the US Open, Great Britain and its increasingly deep pool of top men's tennis players have convened again. This time they are gathered in Manchester for the Davis Cup with the shared goal of correcting last year's disappointment and taking their first positive step to competing for the title.

Their long-time Davis Cup captain, Leon Smith, has drawn upon the top four singles players Cameron Norrie, Dan Evans, Andy Murray and Jack Draper alongside Neal Skupski, the Wimbledon men's doubles champion.

"I love being part of this team," Murray said. "We've got a great staff, everyone gets on well. And as a team I think all of us probably believe we have an opportunity to win as well, which is exciting for everyone."

To advance to the "final eight", the quarter-final knockout stages in Malaga during the final week of the season in November, the GB team must finish the week in the top two of their four-team round-robin group.

The home team face Australia today, Switzerland on Friday and France on Sunday in ties decided over the best of three rubbers, with doubles being the third decisive runner. The other groups are being contested this week across Europe in Bologna, Italy; Valencia, Spain; and Split, Croatia.

For so long Murray was the only elite singles player on the British team, with the second competitor decided among a low-ranked group of players. Such is the strength in depth of the men's team, Smith faces an interesting challenge of making the right personnel choices, which is further clouded by form.

Despite being the lowest-ranked singles player of the group after struggling with injury this season, Draper had the best US Open among the group, reaching the fourth round for the first time in his second tour-level event back from injury. Although he has established himself as the best player in Great Britain over the past two years, Norrie has been healthy but in poor form this summer.

After their performances in New York, Murray actually seemed to be the player most in doubt as he indicated that he might opt out of the team and conceded that Draper, who was added to the team after New York, would be ahead of him in the pecking order. On Monday, Murray said his comments were fuelled partly by the frustration of defeat. "I said [to Smith], if I'm not needed I completely get that. But, for whatever reason, he asked me to come," Murray said.

What is clear is the group will have to perform far better than last year when they were also fortunate to contest the group stages at home in Glasgow. Not only did they lose, but their failure to advance was confirmed after the second match, meaning they had to return two days later to contest a dead tie versus Kazakhstan.



Andy Murray is part of a strong Davis Cup squad

Halep plans to appeal suspension

Continued *from back page*

a four-year ban." The sanction was announced by an independent tribunal after they sat through two days of evidence from scientific experts, sifted through 8,000 pages of evidence, and also heard from Halep. The tribunal said it accepted Halep's argument that she had taken a contaminated supplement but determined the volume she ingested could not have resulted in the concentration of roxadustat found in the positive sample.

They also upheld the athlete biological passport charge with their panel of experts saying they had no reason to doubt the unanimous "strong opinion" reached by each of the three independent Athlete Passport Management Unit experts that "likely doping" was the explanation for the irregularities in Halep's profile.

Halep, who has been provisionally suspended since October 2022, will not be able to play professional tennis again until 6 October 2026 – although Halep said she plans to appeal.

Karen Moorhouse, the chief executive officer at the ITIA, said: "After a complex hearing process, we welcome the independent tribunal's decision. The volume of evidence for the tribunal to consider in both the roxadustat and ABP proceedings was substantial. The ITIA has followed the proper processes as we would with any other individual – in accordance with the world anti-doping code – fulfilling our purpose and responsibility to uphold the principle of fair competition, on behalf of the sport."

Curry will miss two matches after admitting red-card offence

Gerard Meagher
Le Touquet

Tom Curry will miss England's next two World Cup matches against Japan and Chile after he was suspended for his red card in their opening pool match against Argentina last Saturday. At his disciplinary hearing yesterday Curry accepted his tackle on Argentina's Juan Cruz Mallía warranted a red card and he was handed a three-match ban, which will be reduced to two provided he attends "tackle school".

The 25-year-old flanker became the fourth England player to be sent off since March, when tackling Mallía in the third minute of his side's 27-10 win in Marseille. It was Curry's first England appearance under Steve Borthwick, the head coach, and his first game since late May after sustaining an ankle injury in the summer.

Mitigating Curry's absence, Billy Vunipola is available again after suspension and could come in at No 8 with Ben Earl moving to openside. But England are well stocked in the back row, and Jack Willis and Lewis Ludlam are alternative options. Curry did not take part in England's main training session yesterday, instead doing indoor work, which suggested Borthwick was planning for the Japan game on Saturday without him.

By accepting the charge, England have avoided another disciplinary circus similar to that which surrounded Owen Farrell after his sending off against Wales last month. That said, some supporters remain confused as to why Curry has been punished while South Africa's Jesse Kriel and Chile's Martin Sigren were not for similar - if not identical - tackles.

The upshot is that Curry is deprived of valuable game time against Japan though it is unlikely he would have been selected to face Chile in any case



Tom Curry clashes with Juan Cruz Mallía early in the game on Saturday

and Borthwick will have him back at his disposal for England's final pool game against Samoa. The entry point for Curry's ban was six weeks but - after considering mitigating factors such as admitting foul play and the "correctness of the red card at the first opportunity", and an exemplary disciplinary record, the panel awarded him the maximum 50% reduction.

Meanwhile the former England second-row George Kruis has joined the squad in Le Touquet as a lineout consultant. Kruis, 33, was part of the squad that reached the World Cup final in 2019 and won 45 caps. During his career he was widely considered a lineout specialist, working with Borthwick when he was one of Eddie Jones's assistants and during their time at Saracens. Having spent the final two years of his career in Japan, Kruis is also familiar with a number of England's opponents on Sunday.

"George helps with the lineout," the England attack coach, Richard Wigglesworth, said. "[He] and Steve chat for hours behind closed doors and I really don't want to listen to those conversations. He helps the callers and the lineout menu they get. It's great to have him around because he has an affinity with so many of the lads. It's been really nice having him for a few days. He'll be jetting in and out a bit but he's always on the phone and speaking with Steve."

No pain, no gain for 'leggy' England

Sluggish warm-up matches were all part of the plan for the strength and conditioning guru known as 'Smart Aled'

Robert Kitson
Le Touquet

Finally it is starting to make sense. England's poor form in their pre-World Cup warm-up games has been extensively documented but there was a cunning plan all along. And its architect? A Welshman who openly admits to being "hard" at times, with a penchant for taking players "to dark places" and using watt bikes as his instruments of torture.

Meet Aled Walters, the strength and conditioning guru who helped South Africa to lift the Webb Ellis Cup in 2019. The Springboks lost their opening game but bounced back to conquer the world. Now the Carmarthen-born Walters is in England's corner and is busy working on the sequel.

Because if the opening pool win against Argentina on Saturday revealed a different side to the world, England also looked better physically. During August, when asked repeatedly if their match weeks had heavier-than-usual training loads, the management insisted there was nothing unusual going on. Now it has emerged that the squad, among other things, played a virtually full-bore practice game on the Tuesday before their defeat in Dublin.

Walters acknowledges England looked "leggy" as they stumbled through their warm-up programme but he says there was method in their madness, even if it meant letting down the paying public. "People are going to be worried, aren't they? They were thinking: 'There's a World Cup round the corner and they look terrible. They don't look fit … they're lacking energy.' But we knew what was coming and the players did as well.

"People on the outside being critical … I get it. We didn't look energetic. But we have confidence in our planning and our programme so that short-term pain should lead to something when we head into the Japan game."

According to Walters, England had to do something different because of the disruption that has swirled around the national team over the past year. He joined the Rugby Football Union from Leicester in June and compares his task to a weekend crash course before sitting a driving test. "We didn't have the advantage many nations have had of having four years - or eight years - with the same coaches and same players.

"We couldn't afford to row back early. We just didn't have enough prep done to be able to do that. So yeah, we looked leggy, but I'm glad we did because if we didn't look leggy in the August Tests, we wouldn't have done enough."

Experience has also taught him to hold his nerve. Having started with the Scarlets, the former Loughborough University student has also worked for Taranaki in New Zealand, the Brumbies in Australia and Munster, as well as the Boks and the Tigers. Along the way he has learned from his mistakes, particularly those occasions when he has slightly misjudged the balance between intense preparation and weekend performance. "I've made enough errors in the past that I now know what it needs to look like."

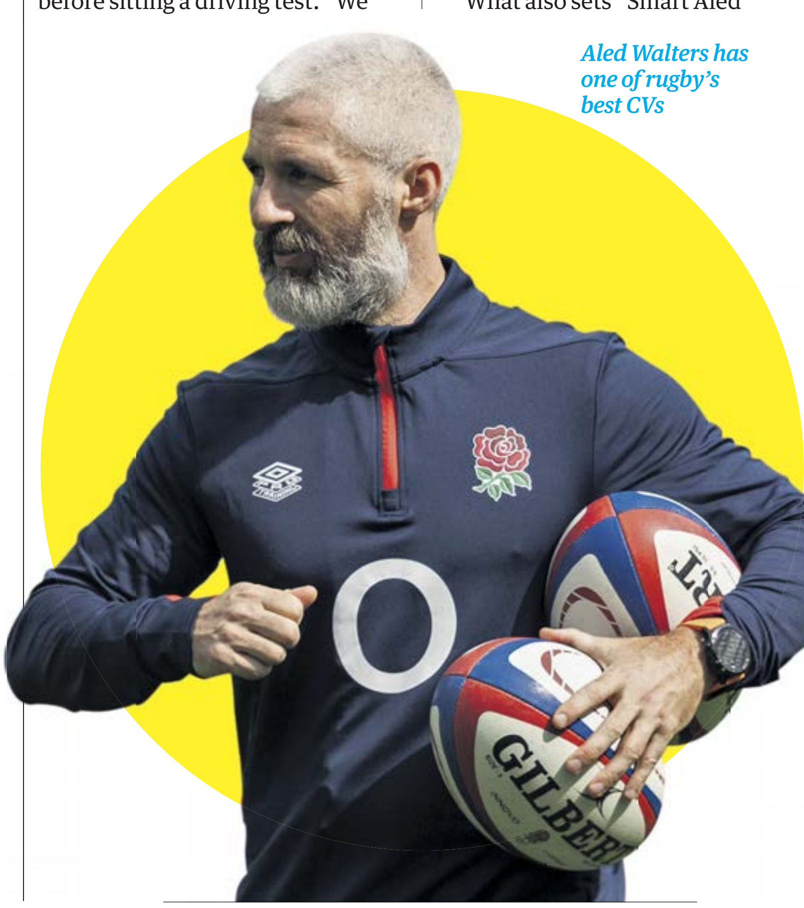
What also sets "Smart Aled" apart from many other conditioning gurus, is his gregarious nature and sense of humour. Walters is a natural mood enhancer who long ago learned that fun and fitness do not have to be mutually exclusive. "Years ago Mark Taylor said I was the most negative S&C coach he'd ever experienced. I'm not like that. I'm hard, because I know where we have to build to. But I need to smile and I get energy from people laughing and smiling. I've been around long enough to appreciate when guys need to laugh and the times when they need a prod. It's about feeling what's appropriate."

Recent examples have included singing "Happy Birthday" to England's defence coach, Kevin Sinfield, three times - "Can you imagine him eating a cake? What's a birthday treat for him? Probably running a marathon and raising £1 million or something" - but his speciality is testing the willpower of popular players such as Bevan Rodd or Billy Vunipola.

"It depends what they are weakest at," Walters says. "I really like watt bikes. The guys who are terrible get the bike quite often. Billy is strong on the bike so I know it's out on the field where I can get to him. Anything that gets them into the dark, where they get really uncomfortable. When you get hardened to it, anything they face in games should be relatively fine."

Underpinning all of this, though, is a single collective goal and a determination to ensure England peak at precisely the right time. "To get someone fitter you almost have to dig them into a hole first to allow them to recover and then come out stronger. That's a big thing. Were our players unfit six weeks ago? No, they were just under-recovered.

"There was a famous Australian swimming coach, Bill Sweetenham, who worked with the British Olympic team. He made sure the swimmers were tired going into the world championships, which just preceded the Olympics. They got some medals but he knew that if you can produce when you are tired and lacking energy, what are you going to be like when you are free of fatigue and energetic? That is what we are getting to now."



Aled Walters has one of rugby's best CVs

BOB BRADFORD/CAMERASPORT VIA GETTY IMAGES

Organisers to keep 'awful' choir national anthems

Luke McLaughlin

The renditions of the national anthems on the opening weekend of the Rugby World Cup have attracted widespread criticism, but the Guardian understands organisers have no plans to change the arrangements sung by children's choirs.

La Marseillaise at Stade de France before France's showdown against the All Blacks, in the first match of the seven-week tournament last Friday night, was a distinctly confused affair in which the home nation's players appeared to be badly out of sync - and even out of tune - with the schoolchildren singing along with them in the stadium in Saint-Denis.

That may have been put down to teething problems on opening night. But at seven further matches over the weekend, recorded children's choirs accompanied the singing of each country's anthem, only to be met with an almost universally hostile response from TV viewers.

Many of them posted on X (formerly known as Twitter) to express disapproval, with various users calling the anthems "dreadful", "a mess" and "awful".

The anthems are part of a project that involves no fewer than 7,000 children from diverse backgrounds, called La Mêlée des Chœurs. Tournament organisers said the children "will learn how to sing the anthems of all 20 countries participating in the tournament" and, guided by 300 teachers, "they also will be able to discover the culture, history and language of each of these countries".

The host nation France, meanwhile, will continue the quest for their first Webb Ellis Cup tomorrow against Uruguay in Lille, hopefully this time as in tune with the anthem as they are as a team on the pitch.

Third one-day international

Returning Archer targeting reserve slot at World Cup

Simon Burnton

The dream of seeing Jofra Archer play for England at the World Cup moved a step closer to reality yesterday as the 28-year-old bowled off a full run-up in the Oval nets during the team's preparations for the third one-day international against New Zealand.

Although Archer has not played a competitive game since 6 May, England continue to hope he will be able to travel to India at the end of the month as one of three reserve players, and potentially play at some point in the tournament. He is not in the squad for the New Zealand series, nor for the three games against Ireland that follow it, but is edging closer to fitness after being ruled out of the summer by the recurrence of a stress fracture to his right elbow.

"He looks in a good place," David Willey said. "I don't know where he's at fitness-wise but he was bowling good wheels out there. Everyone knows how good he is, what he's capable of and how he can impact games, so to have him close or not far away from being fit is fantastic news."

Archer worked yesterday with Andrew Flintoff, whose own recovery from injury – in his case, a near-fatal car crash while filming for the BBC's Top Gear last December – has allowed him to take part in several training sessions with England over the last week.

"He's a legend of the game, I grew up watching him play and just to have him here with us is fantastic," said Willey, who is likely to be rested for at least one of the remaining fixtures, at the Oval today and Lord's on Friday. However, the 33-year-old hopes his all-round credentials and his fitness record will stand him in good stead when a final 15-man World Cup squad is named on 28 September.

"Call me a donkey if you want but to take a donkey out to what could be a tough trip, you might need a donkey. They keep going, donkeys, don't they?"

When Willey fielded a call last month from Matthew Mott, England's white-ball coach, informing him that he would take part in this series, he was also told he would be going to the World Cup. Mott has since said the squad is merely "provisional".

Willey said: "The phone call I received was that I'm in the squad for the World Cup, but it's professional sport and things do change."

Mott is considering tweaking the squad to find a place for Harry Brook. Willey was dropped from the squad that won the World Cup in 2019 to make way for Archer and subsequently "fell out of love with the game for a period of time", and though several specialist batters may consider their places at risk he could yet be forced to repeat the experience. "Goodness me, that would be a tough one to take," he said."Somebody is going to miss out ."

England (probable) Roy, Bairstow, Malan, Stokes, Brook, Buttler (capt, wkt), Moeen, S Curran, Woakes, Rashid, Carse.
New Zealand (probable) Conway, Young, Nicholls, Mitchell, Latham (capt, wkt), Phillips, Ravindra, Santner, Southee, Henry, Boult.
Start 12.30pm, Kia Oval, Sky Sports Cricket



◀ *Jofra Archer (right) joined former all-rounder Andrew Flintoff (left) at England's Oval training session yesterday*
ANDREW COULDRIDGE/ACTION IMAGES VIA REUTERS

Vilas century puts Lancashire firmly in control

Tanya Aldred *Old Trafford*
Raf Nicholson *Northamptonshire*

Autumn blew across the County Championship, shortening sessions at Old Trafford, wiping out the day at Edgbaston. But at Canterbury, where Kent are chasing crucial survival points and Nottinghamshire risk being drawn into the mix, the game moved on swiftly.

After an early wobble, **Nottinghamshire** made a good fist of their second innings after being asked to follow on. Reduced to 78 for five by Joey Evison and Michael Hogan, plus a balletic one-handed catch by Zak Crawley, Joe Clarke and Lyndon James then put on an unbeaten 99 to reduce the deficit to just four runs.

It wasn't good news for fellow members of the relegation pack, **Middlesex**, thwarted first by the weather and then by **Lancashire**'s batting at a soggy Old Trafford. The soon-to-retire Dane Vilas hit 124 and Luke Wells a feisty 97 as Middlesex's spinners were put to the sword. The Lancashire lead was 136 when the rain came.

At Hove, the Division Two promotion hopefuls **Leicestershire** set off on the unlikely pursuit of 499 after **Sussex** declared five balls after lunch. The pursuit was made marginally less unlikely by stumps with Colin Ackermann unbeaten on 103, and Leicester needing another 278 for an incredible victory.

The **Derbyshire** captain, Leus du Plooy, zipped to a fifth century of a super season on a wet day at Bristol; the 22-year-old leg-spinner Ed Middleton picked up his first Championship wicket when Mark Watt charged down the pitch.

At Sophia Gardens, **Glamorgan** were forced to follow on after **Yorkshire**'s Matt Revis pocketed a career-best five for 50. Sam Northeast (45) and Eddie Byrom (52) had reduced the deficit to 107 by stumps.

The second women's one-day international between **England** and **Sri Lanka** at Northampton was washed out after the tourists were reduced to 106 for nine in 30.5 overs, having been asked to bat.

Charlie Dean – in the side after England chose to rest the 17-year-old Mahika Gaur – wrapped up the powerplay with the crucial wicket of Chamari Athapaththu. It was a wily piece of bowling from the off-spinner, who turned the first three balls past the bat before sending down a fuller arm ball, to trap the Sri Lanka captain for 34.



▲ *Dane Vilas hit 124 from 180 balls with nine fours and a six*

Results and cricket scoreboard

Football

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFYING

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Scotland	5	5	0	0	12	1	+11	15
Spain	4	3	0	1	16	3	+13	9
Norway	5	2	1	2	7	8	-1	7
Georgia	5	1	1	3	5	13	-8	4
Cyprus	5	0	0	5	2	17	-15	0

Norway (2) **2** **Georgia** (0) **1**
Haaland 25, Ødegaard 33 — Zivzivadze 90

Spain (2) **6** **Cyprus** (0) **0**
Gavi 18, Merino 33, Joselu 70
F Torres 73 83, Baena 77

Group C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
England	5	4	1	0	16	2	+14	13
Italy	4	2	1	1	6	4	+2	7
Ukraine	5	2	1	2	6	7	-1	7
North Macedonia	5	2	1	2	7	12	-5	7
Malta	5	0	0	5	1	11	-10	0

Italy (2) **2** **Ukraine** (1) **1**
Frattesi 12 30 — Yarmolenko 41

Malta (0) **0** **North Macedonia** (2) **2**
Elmas 5, Manev 41

Group F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Austria	5	4	1	0	12	4	+8	13
Belgium	5	4	1	0	13	1	+12	13
Sweden	5	2	0	3	11	8	+3	6
Estonia	5	0	1	4	2	16	-14	1
Azerbaijan	4	0	1	3	2	11	-9	1

Belgium (2) **5** **Estonia** (0) **0**
Vertonghen 4, Trossard 18
Lukaku 56 58, De Ketelaere 88

Sweden (0) **1** **Austria** (0) **3**
Holm 90 — Gregoritsch 53, Arnautovic 56 69pen

Group I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Switzerland	6	4	2	0	17	5	+12	14
Israel	6	3	2	1	7	7	0	11
Romania	5	2	3	0	7	4	+3	9
Belarus	6	1	1	4	4	11	-7	4
Kosovo	5	0	4	1	5	6	-1	4
Andorra	6	0	2	4	3	10	-7	2

Israel (0) **1** **Belarus** (0) **0**
Kanichowsky 90

Romania (-) **L** **Kosovo** (-) **L**
Match delayed due to crowd trouble

Switzerland (0) **3** **Andorra** (0) **0**
Itten 49, Xhaka 84
Shaqiri 90pen

INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLIES

Scotland (0) **1** **England** (2) **3**
Maguire 67og — Foden 32, Bellingham 35, Kane 81

Azerbaijan 2 Jordan 1; China 0 Syria 1; Costa Rica 1 United Arab Emirates 4; Egypt 1 Tunisia 3; Germany 2 France 1; Ghana 3 Liberia 1; Iran 4 Angola 0; Ivory Coast L Mali L; Japan 4 Turkey 2; Kenya 0 South Sudan 1; Morocco 1 Burkina Faso 0; Qatar 1 Russia 1; Saudi Arabia 0 South Korea 1; Senegal L Algeria L; South Africa 1 DR Congo 0

EFL TROPHY

Peterborough (1) **2** **Cambridge United** (0) **0**
Katongo 19
Mason-Clark 54

Notts County (0) **1** **Wolves U21** (1) **2**
Hubner 90og — Hasketh 17, Fraser 55

EURO UNDER-21 QUALIFYING

Group A Republic of Ireland 3 San Marino 0. **Group F** Ukraine 1 Northern Ireland 0. **Group I** Lithuania 2 Wales 3

Cricket

SECOND WOMEN'S ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL

England v Sri Lanka

Northampton No result due to rain.

Sri Lanka
***AMC Athapaththu** lbw b Dean 34
RMV Gunaratne c Jones b Cross 8
HDS Madavi c Jones b Yes 6
GWH Perera not out 31
HIH Karunaratne c Glenn b Davidson-Richards 8
WK Dilhari c & b Dean 0
†MAA Sanjeewani b Davidson-Richards 0
OU Ranasinghe lbw b Glenn 12
KDU Prabodhani c Jones b Filer 0
WGA Kulasuriya run out 0
Extras (lb2, w5) 7
Total (for 9, 30.5 overs) 106
Fall 26, 41, 53, 76, 78, 79, 95, 102, 106. **To bat** I Ranaweera. **Bowling** Cross 5-0-35-1; Filer 8-0-25-2; Dean 7-3-12-2; Davidson-Richards 5-0-16-2; Glenn 5.5-1-16-1.

ASIA CUP

Super Four Colombo India 213 (RG Sharma 53; DN Wellalage 5-40, KIC Asalanka 4-18). Sri Lanka 172 (K Yadav 4-43). India beat Sri Lanka by 41 runs.

THIRD MEN'S ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL

Potchefstroom South Africa 338-6 (AK Markram 102 no, Q de Kock 82, T Bavuma 57). Australia 227 (DA Warner 78; G Coetzee 4-50). South Africa beat Australia by 111 runs.

LV= INSURANCE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

Division One (third day of four)

Kent v Nottinghamshire

Canterbury Nottinghamshire (3pts) trail Kent (7) by four runs with five second-innings wickets remaining.

Kent First innings 446 (Z Crawley 158, JA Leaning 64, DJ Bell-Drummond 60).

Nottinghamshire First innings (overnight 219-8)
B A Hutton c Finch b Gilchrist 31
D Paterson c Leaning b Nijjar 16
A M Fernando not out 14
Extras (lb9, nb6) 15
Total (98.2 overs) 265
Fall cont 229. **Bowling** Hogan 13-3-31-2; Gilchrist 19.2-4-65-1; Chahal 29-10-63-3; Evison 5-0-30-0; Nijjar 32-11-67-4.

Nottinghamshire Second innings
BT Slater c Hogan b Evison 39
Haseeb Hameed b Hogan 7
***SJ Mullaney** c sub b Evison 13
JM Clarke not out 61
M Montgomery b Hogan 6
†TJ Moores c Crawley b Hogan 0
LW James not out 38
Extras (b3, lb8, nb2) 13
Total (for 5, 74 overs) 177
Fall 19, 63, 64, 78, 78.
To bat CG Harrison, BA Hutton, AM Fernando, D Paterson. **Bowling** Hogan 13-8-23-3; Gilchrist 7-0-31-0; Nijjar 24-5-47-0; Chahal 13-0-28-0; Evison 13-3-24-2; Leaning 4-0-13-0.

Lancashire v Middlesex

Emirates Old Trafford Lancashire (3pts) lead Middlesex (0) by 136 runs with five first-innings wickets remaining.

Middlesex First innings 194 (SD Robson 86).

Lancashire First innings (overnight 132-3)
LWP Wells c Simpson b Yadav 97
DJ Vilas lbw b Bamber 124
G Bell not out 56
GP Balderson not out 0
Extras (lb5, nb12) 17
Total (for 5, 88.1 overs) 330
Fall cont 224, 330. **To bat** TW Hartley, TE Bailey, WSA Williams, L Wood.
Bowling Bamber 20-6-45-1; Higgins 16.1-2-62-0; Roland-Jones 6-0-33-0; Yadav 30-4-113-2; De Caires 16-2-72-2.

Warwickshire v Northamptonshire

Edgbaston Northamptonshire 250 (KK Nair 78, EN Gay 77). Warwickshire 142-4. Warwickshire (3pts) trail Northamptonshire (1) by 108 runs with six first-innings wickets remaining. *No play yesterday due to rain.*

Division Two (third day of four)

Glamorgan v Yorkshire

Sophia Gardens Glamorgan (3pts) trail Yorkshire (8) by 107 runs with eight second-innings wickets remaining.

Yorkshire First innings 500 (S Masood 192, FJ Bean 93, GCH Hill 71).

Glamorgan First innings (overnight 150-6)
***KS Carlson** c Wharton b Revis 64
DA Douthwaite lbw b Coad 37
AW Gorvin b Revis 47
JAR Harris b Coad 0
JP McIlroy not out 30
Extras (b9, lb5, nb4) 18
Total (89.2 overs) 273
Fall cont173, 217, 217. **Did not bat** BI Kellaway. **Bowling** Coad 10-3-17-3; Thompson 11-0-42-1; Cliff 8-1-41-0; Bess 33-9-72-1; Revis 16.2-3-50-5; Hill 9-1-33-0; Lyth 2-1-4-0.

Glamorgan Second innings
Zain-ul-Hassan c Hill b Coad 0
EJ Byrom not out 52
CA Ingram c Lyth b Bess 16
SA Northeast not out 45
Extras (lb1, nb6) 7
Total (for 2, 44 overs) 120
Fall 0, 30. **To bat** *KS Carlson, WT Root, †CB Cooke, BI Kellaway, AW Gorvin, JAR Harris, JP McIlroy, DA Douthwaite.
Bowling Coad 7-2-22-1; Thompson 4-2-8-0; Bess 19-8-26-1; Cliff 5-0-26-0; Revis 4-1-14-0; Lyth 5-1-13-0.

Gloucestershire v Derbyshire

Bristol Derbyshire (6pts) lead Gloucestershire (6) by 21 runs with one first-innings wicket remaining.

Gloucestershire First innings 377 (OJ Price 132, GL van Buuren 78; Anuj Dal 6-69).

Derbyshire First innings (overnight 261-6)
***JL du Plooy** not out 103
Anuj Dal b Gohar 21
AT Thomson c Hammond b Goodman 34
MRJ Watt st Bracey b Middleton 19
Extras (b1, lb4, w3, nb18) 26
Total (for 9, 110 overs) 398
Fall cont 292, 357, 398. **To bat** PR Brown.
Bowling Shaw 19-2-62-0; Goodman 16-2-80-2; Gohar 38-4-121-4; LA Charlesworth 11-2-50-1; Middleton 18-1-55-1; Price 8-1-25-0.

Sussex v Leicestershire

Hove Leicestershire (3pts), with seven second-innings wickets remaining, require 278 runs to beat Sussex (4) .

Sussex First innings 262 (FJ Hudson-Prentice 65; MET Salisbury 5-73).

Leicestershire First innings 108 (A Karvelas 4-14).

Sussex Second innings (overnight 234-5)
JM Coles lbw b Scriven 63
FJ Hudson-Prentice c Ackermann b Currie 44
JJ Carson lbw b Scriven 21
A Karvelas run out (Currie) 23
HT Crocombe not out 11
Extras (lb6, w1, nb2) 9
Total (for 9 dec, 102 overs) 344
Fall cont 268, 297, 321, 344.
Did not bat JD Unadkat.
Bowling Wright 21-0-85-1; Salisbury 6-2-22-0; Currie 18-1-61-1; Scriven 20-5-55-4; Ackermann 4-0-15-0; Ahmed 27-3-91-2; Umar Amin 6-1-9-0.

Leicestershire Second innings
RK Patel c Pujara b Karvelas 40
S Budinger lbw b Unadkat 7
***LJ Hill** c Clark b Karvelas 1
CN Ackermann not out 103
Umar Amin not out 61
Extras (b4, lb1, nb4) 9
Total (for 3, 64 overs) 221
Fall 15, 16, 108. **To bat** R Ahmed, †OB Cox, TAR Scriven, SW Currie, CJC Wright, MET Salisbury.
Bowling Unadkat 12-2-29-1; Karvelas 10-4-21-2; Hudson-Prentice 8-4-38-0; Haines 2-0-7-0; Crocombe 10-2-42-0; Carson 14-5-43-0; Coles 8-0-36-0.

Greg Wood's racing tips

Bath **1.40** Galactic Glow **2.15** Acer **2.50** Irrelevant **3.25** Sparked **4.00** Buccabay **4.35** Thahab Ifraj **5.10** Poetic Force

Carlisle **2.05** Nasneen **2.40** Indication Call **3.15** Manxman **3.50** Hostelry **4.25** Mubhijah **5.00** B Associates

Uttoxeter **2.25** Only Fools **3.00** Bumble Bee Bet **3.35** Fat Sam **4.10** Enthused **4.45** Sinister Minister **5.20** Jack The Farmer

Kempton **5.30** Rosenzoo **6.00** Zola Power **6.30** Sparklight **7.00** High Handed **7.30** Folk Star **8.00** Let Life Happen **8.30** Silver Nightfall

Southwell **5.45** Crimson Spirit (nap) **6.15** Yaaser **6.45** Hat Toss **7.15** Hierarchy **7.45** Blazeon Five (nb) **8.15** Lil Guff **8.45** Scampi

Cycling

VUELTA A ESPAÑA

Stage 16 (Liencres-Bejes 119.7km): **1** J Vingegaard (Den) Jumbo-Visma 2hr 38min 23sec; **2** F Fisher-Black (NZ) UAE Emirates at 43; **3** W Poels (Neth) Bahrain Victorious at 49. **Selected others: 73** S Watson (GB) Groupama-FDJ at 9min 50sec; **85** H Carthy (GB) EF Education-EasyPost at same time; **102** G Thomas (GB) Ineos Grenadiers at 9m 59s

Overall standings: 1 S Kuss (US) Jumbo-Visma 57hr 18min 10sec; **2** J Vingegaard (Den) Jumbo-Visma at 29s; **3** P Roglic (Svn) Jumbo-Visma at 1m 33s. **Selected others:** **18** H Carthy (GB) EF Education-EasyPost at 40m 32s; **31** G Thomas (GB) Ineos Grenadiers at 1hr 18m 50s

Fixtures

Football
Emirates FA Cup
First qualifying round Didcot Town v Tadley Calleva
Cymru Premier
Bala Town v The New Saints (7.45pm)

Cricket (10.30am unless stated)
Third Men's One-Day International
England v New Zealand, The Kia Oval (12.30pm)
Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy
Southern Vipers v South East Stars, Ageas Bowl; The Blaze v Sunrisers, Loughborough; Thunder v Northern Diamonds, Sale; Western Storm v Central Sparks, Taunton

▼ *Paul Pogba has tested positive for excess testosterone in Italy*
MATTHEW ASHTON/AMA/GETTY IMAGES



> *It's easy to forget how good he was at Juventus under Conte and Allegri*

'Football is cruel': the tragedy of Pogba's decline

Doping allegations could fatally wound the career of a remarkable talent who struggled for the right role

Jonathan Wilson

'Sometimes," Paul Pogba said, "I don't want to have money any more. I just don't want to play any more. I just want to be with normal people, so they will love me for me – not for the fame, not for the money. Sometimes it's tough." That was Pogba speaking to Al-Jazeera in an interview released on Sunday . A day later, he tested positive for excess non-endogenous testosterone metabolites.

It's just over seven years since Manchester United broke the world transfer record to re-sign Pogba. He was 23, had won four Serie A titles and had been named young player of the tournament at the previous World Cup. Since then, with the very notable exception of winning the 2018 World Cup, it feels like nothing has gone right for him.

Pogba could face a four-year ban if the doping violation is upheld which, given he is 30 and has struggled for some time with knee injuries, would probably mean in effect an end to his career. He awaits the B-sample and still has various avenues of appeal open – as the case of the Atalanta centre-back José Palomino shows, contamination is possible. It feels all too appropriate that the test came after a game in which he was an unused substitute.

"Football is very beautiful, but it's cruel," Pogba said. "People can forget you. You can do something great – the next day, you're nobody." He has felt that more than most, although before the forgetting there was a lot of frustration at the sense his extraordinary talent was being wasted.

And he was hugely talented. It's easy to forget now just how good he was at Juventus, first under Antonio Conte and then under Max Allegri, usually operating on the left of a midfield three, whether in a 3-5-2 or a 4-3-1-2. It was the perfect role for him. Alongside Andrea Pirlo and Claudio Marchisio or Arturo Vidal, with Patrice Evra or Kwadwo Asamoah overlapping from wing-back, he had a certain licence, could make the most of his blend of physical and technical attributes.

He never had such a well-defined role at United. The problem was that he was almost too gifted, his range of skills too great. Sit him deep and it felt a manager wasn't fully exploiting his creativity. But play him too advanced, as a No 10, and it became apparent that Pogba did not quite have the tight technical ability on the turn to operate in a position where he would often be receiving the ball with his back to goal. There was a sense in which he was a player out-of-time, a box-to-box marauder in the manner of Bryan Robson or Steven Gerrard. That shuttling role in a midfield three was essentially the only one in which he could use all his abilities.



Pogba's return to Italy has been chequered

Didier Deschamps has never had a problem with asking a player to suppress his attacking instincts and used Pogba deep alongside N'Golo Kanté as France won the 2018 World Cup; for a month, with a specific goal, in a system that worked, Pogba retained his discipline and nobody felt too cheated that his role was so restricted. That was perhaps never a plausible long-term solution.

This is not, though, just about a technical glitch. There were warning signs in Pogba's first interview when he returned to United, as he spoke of his ambition being not to win the Premier League or the Champions League but to win the Ballon d'Or. He was not one for homilies about wanting what was best for the team.

Pogba is, though, far from the only player to have stagnated at Manchester United. And then there were the injuries: a persistent ankle problem in 2019-20, then hamstring problems in 2021 and, after his return to Juventus in 2022, knee surgery and a series of muscular problems. Since the summer of 2019, Pogba has started only 51 league games.

But that wasn't even the biggest issue. In March 2022, a month before he played his final game for United, he was allegedly kidnapped near Paris by masked men bearing M16 assault rifles. They demanded €13m (£11m) in protection money – €1m for each year of his career – and Pogba seemingly tried to pay, only to be blocked by his bank. Four days earlier, Pogba was the victim of a burglary that occurred while his two young children were in the house.

That summer, his elder brother Mathias released a video in which he accused Pogba of having employed a marabout, a west African holy man called Ibrahim who charged €100 an hour, to place a curse on Kylian Mbappé. Pogba later acknowledged he had consulted a marabout, but only for help with his continual injuries. "Money changes people," Pogba said. "It can break up a family. It can create a war."

The doping allegations will play out. Whatever the truth, the positive test is another sad moment in Pogba's decline. A player whose only fault seemed to be to have so much ability that he didn't quite fit into modern midfields is facing the collapse of his career. Whoever's fault that is, there is something tragic in it.

Analysis
Suzanne Wrack



Morgan's weak line of questioning let Rubiales look reasonable

Piers Morgan attempts to give the impression of grilling the disgraced president of the Spanish football federation Luis Rubiales, except he's not, not really. It is performative, it is all performative. The broadcaster's continued pushing towards the end of his one-hour Piers Morgan Uncensored interview for a reason as to why the resigning president says it was inappropriate for him to kiss Jenni Hermoso, following Spain's win at the Women's World Cup, but will not apologise to the player for his actions is all part of the show, an attempt to give the illusion of good journalism.

Except we know Morgan, we know where he stands on what he perceives as wokeism, we know where he stands on women.

Rubiales did not give Morgan a worldwide exclusive interview because he wanted to clear his name by being put under the microscope by the fiercest of critics; he did so because Morgan would allow him the space to say what he wanted. You can see it in the setup alone, it's stripped back, no furniture, it screams there is nowhere to hide, literally. All that is there is an obscured view of London and two men sitting opposite each other talking. And Morgan is a sympathetic party, his criticism is balanced with a sickening gentleness.

"I can see the impact this has had on you, it's a difficult thing to be accused of what you've been accused of," he says at one point. At another, despite saying previously that Rubiales can't play the victim, he gives him the chance to do just that, asking about the impact on his daughters and the mother who locked herself in a church and went on hunger strike in protest at the perceived witch hunt against her son.

Hermoso stays silent, likely struggling to navigate the intensity of numerous investigations and huge public interest, and likely fearful of a man and federation that seemingly wants to litigiously pursue her to establish his case. Meanwhile Rubiales, perpetrator of the kiss, crotch grab in front of the Spanish royal family and overly familiar approach with other players that the world saw live, is given a platform to attempt to twist the narrative around what we all saw.

Except he won't speak to the details, he can't legally, so instead he is able to speak broadly, to not launch a defence, but instead try to demonstrate his good character.

The interview is "an opportunity", he says. "There's a lot of opinion, a lot of people, a million people follow you. And I think that a lot of people, millions of people, have an opinion about me, about what happened. For me, like I tell you, it's an opportunity to tell the world what really happened. To get that through to the rest of the people."

Except "what really happened" is what we all saw live on TV and that was Rubiales assaulting a player in her workplace. All the interview with Morgan shows is that he still cannot grasp that. "My intentions were noble, enthusiastic, 100% non-sexual, 100%, I repeat, 100%," he says. "It was a mutual act, she came towards me, very happy. We were both emotional," he says at another point.

Except these are all irrelevant straw-man arguments. It doesn't matter whether there was sexual desire there or not, it doesn't matter, ultimately, whether it was consensual or not, it shouldn't have happened.

What Morgan does in his weak line of questioning is reduce the decision of Rubiales's resignation to the one incident. There are no questions about the letter signed by 15 players last year expressing their frustrations at the impact of their environment around the national team on their health.

There are no questions about the players that announced they would not play for Spain at the World Cup. There was no connecting of these issues to what took place after the final or asking whether his actions were symptomatic of the environment the players for the Spanish women's national team have repeatedly complained about for close to a decade.

These omissions allow the kiss and his admittance that it was wrong to be viewed by the public in isolation. Remove the context of the players' complaints, of the macho culture of Spanish football and Spanish society – that is prevalent and embedded in capitalist society worldwide – from the discussion and you reduce the understanding why the reaction has been so, rightly, strong and, appalling, allowing Rubiales to appear reasonable.

> *Rubiales gave Morgan a world exclusive because he would allow him the space to say what he wanted*

High and mighty battle of auld foes

McTominay fails to state his case to Ten Hag in defeat

Midfielder will always have a home in Scotland but performance will not help club situation at United



Ewan Murray
Hampden Park



Eighteen years have passed since *that* Roy Keane interview on MUTV without one glaring inaccuracy being addressed. "I can't understand why people in Scotland rave about Darren Fletcher," Keane said. People in Scotland actually did nothing of the sort. Fletcher earned 80 caps for his country at a time when qualifying for a major tournament felt an unattainable dream. As a Manchester United player, Scotland supporters always demanded far more from Fletcher than he was able to give. A midfield player who broke up play wasn't deemed flashy enough. Fletcher spent much of his Scotland spell being hugely under-appreciated.

The same cannot be said of Scott McTominay. People in Scotland rave about him alright. This partly resonates in circumstance. As the Tartan Army sing, McTominay "turned the English down" when committing his international future to Scotland. Alex McLeish's second tenure was a troubled one but his convincing of McTominay to don navy blue left a legacy that should be appreciated. Steve Clarke has felt the benefit.

A Glasgow taxi driver remains aghast at, having attempted to strike up conversation, the attitude of José Mourinho, who essentially told him to be quiet and concentrate on the road ahead between the airport and a city centre hotel. Mourinho, then in charge at Old Trafford, was in town for a Scotland match in which McTominay was to play. Erik ten Hag has no such interest; McTominay has found solace in Scotland colours while routinely ignored by his club.

Clarke's deployment of McTominay as one of two supporting midfield players - John McGinn the other - has generally proved a huge success. The trouble is, in a game like this where the opposition has clear technical and territorial superiority, it leaves McTominay on the fringes. His contributions had been minimal before Phil Foden flicked England ahead. McTominay may feel he should have blocked the Foden cross which preceded England's second but the bigger issue was that he was failing to impose himself where it mattered. On the basis Ten Hag wants to make United a club side with standing reflective of England, one assumes he took note. Whisper it, but what transpired in the first half here rather endorsed Ten Hag's stance. In Declan Rice and Kalvin Phillips, England had the outstanding midfielders on display.

A 150th anniversary and associated commercial spin-off was the key motivation for this friendly. Yet Clarke was also content to face high calibre opposition - Scotland play France in a similar movie next month - to assess how his team may cope in the top section of the next Nations League. During a grim opening 45 minutes, the gulf between England and Scotland appeared pronounced. McTominay, McGinn and Callum McGregor could not influence proceedings at all. A blunder by Andy Robertson, the normally dependable Scottish captain, rather summed it up. Scotland were being forced into aberrations due to being outclassed.

That Clarke opted to leave McTominay in position when making his first set of substitutions on the hour mark was intriguing. McTominay had just cheaply coughed up possession to Jude Bellingham - twice - and remained an otherwise peripheral figure. This did, however, show how much faith Clarke has in the 26-year-old. It was rewarded, McTominay involved in intricate build-up play which gave Scotland a pulse before Harry Maguire's latest moment of ignominy. As Scotland found their feet, so too did McTominay.

McTominay, McGinn and McGregor could not influence proceedings at all

Harry Kane punctured Scottish expectation. The extent of Gareth Southgate's celebration at that point was an admission of how much this victory meant. Clarke will have no interest in being patted on the head but this was also a nod towards Scotland's new-found status. The frustration for McTominay will be that on an evening when he could have delivered an undeniable case to Ten Hag, he was unable to do so.

United's valuation of McTominay, thought to be £45m, was undoubtedly a reason he remained at the club into September but the player also seems to believe he can change his manager's stance. Bluntly, a stand-out showing in Cyprus on Friday would count for little on that front.

Clarke apparently has no interest in pursuing Elliot Anderson and Harvey Barnes any further. Scotland's manager has made his case to the Newcastle duo, who must decide whether to declare for Scotland or England. It is not Clarke's style to press for answers.

This was a bump in the road and a bloody nose against old foes whom Scotland have not defeated in Glasgow since 1985 but in the grand scheme hardly matters. Clarke would even be buoyed by making a game of things after the interval. Euro 2024, Scotland's key target, remains so tantalisingly close. McTominay must hope his club situation is clearer by then. Even if it is not, he forever has a home for an adopted country.

American firm in talks to buy majority stake in Everton

Ed Aarons

Everton's owner, Farhad Moshiri, is in advanced talks with the American investment firm 777 Partners over a potential majority purchase of the Premier League strugglers.

The Miami-based firm, which already owns several clubs in Europe including Genoa, Standard Liège and Hertha Berlin, held talks with Moshiri over acquiring a 25% stake in Everton earlier in the summer before they entered a period of exclusivity with MSP Sports Capital. Those negotiations collapsed last month amid opposition from an existing Everton lender, Rights and Media Funding Limited, although MSP are reported to have provided a £100m loan to help fund the building of the new Bramley-Moore Dock Stadium.

The Guardian understands that 777 Partners has returned to the negotiating table with a view to a full takeover of the club, having made no secret of their desire to invest in a Premier League side since making their first foray into football by purchasing a minority stake in Sevilla in 2015.

The owners Joshua Wander and Steven Pasko are believed to have met Amanda Staveley's PCP Capital Partners over a potential investment in Newcastle and also held talks with the Chelsea co-owner Todd Boehly this year. Neither Everton or 777 Partners have commented.



▲ *Everton owner Farhad Moshiri is in advanced talks with 777 Partners*

Any takeover would be subject to the Premier League's owners and directors test, which was beefed up in March and enables them to block people from becoming directors if they are under investigation for conduct that would result in a "disqualifying event" if proven.

There remain doubts over whether 777 Partners would pass the test having been accused of fraud and breach of contract in a civil case by Timothy O'Neil-Dunne, who worked as chief commercial officer at Flair Airlines. A statement released by 777 Partners strenuously denied the allegations.

Wander was arrested in 2003 after being caught with 31 grams of cocaine that were sent to his address in the post, which he later admitted was for him and a friend. 777 Partners told the Brazilian newspaper O Globo that the "single misdemeanour charge from 20 years ago" was "ancient history".

Football In brief

Manchester United

'Scapegoat' Sancho removes post on X

Jadon Sancho has removed the message in which the forward questioned Erik ten Hag's reason for dropping him for Manchester United's 3-1 defeat at Arsenal, in what is being viewed as a positive development regarding his future at the club. After the match on 3 September, Ten Hag stated Sancho had not travelled to the Emirates Stadium because he had not performed in training. Immediately, Sancho responded with the message on X, formerly known as Twitter, which he also pinned to his account until deleting it yesterday. In it, Sancho claimed that Ten Hag's explanation had been "completely untrue". While it is understood talks are ongoing regarding this matter, Sancho's decision to delete the message is a sign that he wants a positive outcome, and is also being viewed as a positive move by the club. The full message read: "Please don't believe everything you read! I will not allow people saying things that [are] completely untrue. I have conducted myself in training very well this week. I believe there are other reasons for this matter that I won't go into, I have been a scapegoat for a long time which isn't fair!" **Jamie Jackson**

Manchester United Women

Bøe Risa leaves United to join Atlético Madrid

Manchester United have announced Vilde Bøe Risa has left the Women's Super League club to join Atlético Madrid. The midfielder follows Alessia Russo and Ona Batlle in leaving United. **PA Media**



Bellingham and Kane give Scotland reality check despite Maguire gaffe

Scotland 1
Maguire 67og

England 3
Foden 32, Bellingham 35, Kane 81

	Scotland	England
Possession	42%	58%
Shots on target	0	6
Corners	1	5

David Hytner
Hampden Park

So, this is what happens when Gareth Southgate plays Jude Bellingham as a pure No 10. Real Madrid have discovered that it is a pretty good idea to have him in a high position, their new darling slicing through La Liga defences since his big-money transfer from Borussia Dortmund, scoring in every game. Here, it was Scotland's turn to suffer.

England were excellent in the first half, Bellingham involved in Phil Foden's deft opener and scoring the second himself. There is something irresistible about his fusion of twinkle-toed skill and driving power; his desire to be direct and hurt opponents.

Weirdly, and worryingly, Southgate's team flirted with disaster. On as a half-time substitute, Harry Maguire suffered at the hands of the Scotland support and he burned with indignation when he stuck out an ill-advised leg to divert Andy Robertson's cross into his own goal.

It felt inconceivable that England would mess this up. They were superior in every department, Scotland's excellent form – five wins out of five in Euro 2024 qualification – not translating to this showpiece. Then again, England had become a little too comfortable after the interval, the intensity levels down.

There will be plenty of discussion about Maguire. It had to be him. It had to be a ponderous clump from the player that is a long way from Manchester United's favoured lineup but who can still call himself a Southgate first-choice. For how much longer, given the positive steps that Marc Guéhi has taken in this international break and John Stones's status as the undisputed central defensive linchpin? Everybody had the same thought here. What if Maguire makes a mistake in a knockout tie at next summer's Euros?

Bellingham is an altogether happier subject and, with 82 minutes on the clock, he went yet again, spinning in a tight circle to lose one blue shirt before surging away from another. Scotland just wanted him to stop but he was remorseless. The weight on the pass slipped through for Harry Kane was perfect. It was one touch and finish from the captain. Game over.

Southgate knew that he needed a more convincing performance than in Saturday's 1-1 qualification draw against Ukraine in Poland – and especially because it was Scotland, a fixture that has so often been a reference point for him. He got it, the switch to 4-2-3-1 working, Bellingham supported by Declan Rice and Kalvin Phillips; Foden and Marcus Rashford menacing off the wings.

It was about playing a hostile occasion, as well as the game. Both anthems had been booed, one more lustily than the other, which was entirely in keeping with things.

England hogged possession and it was what they did with it that



Harry Maguire shows his anguish after a second-half own goal

delighted Southgate, some of their one-touch stuff extremely easy on the eye. Scotland struggled to put pressure on the ball and, with Steve Clarke wanting his backline to squeeze high, England could see big spaces to play in their runners.

Bellingham's touch and awareness were stamped all over the opening goal, which had been advertised; his pass on the edge of the area nicely angled for Rashford a little further forward. Rashford went right to Kyle Walker and, when the full-back drilled low across goal, Foden's reactions were quick, the cushioned diversion past Angus Gunn very tidy.

Southgate used Foden on the right, albeit with the licence to drift. The Manchester City player had lifted wastefully high on 19 minutes – was Rashford offside in the buildup? – but he grew into the game, all swerves and instant control.

Scotland were rocking and England completed the one-two punch after a dreadful error from the home captain Robertson. It was Bellingham with the backheel to Foden on the left and then a whipped cross from the latter, which hit Kane and broke towards Robertson. Only he knows what happened next. Instead of clearing, he hesitated and, wires crossed, simply prodded to Bellingham, who swept home.

England might have been out of sight at the interval. Walker lashed



Foden reacts to break the deadlock

Phil Foden turns in Kyle Walker's cross-shot to give England the lead at Hampden Park
STU FORSTER/GETTY IMAGES

wide on 25 minutes and a couple of other breaks did not quite come off.

Southgate had said that too much experimentation with the lineup would have been "ridiculous." He still brought in Lewis Dunk to play alongside Guéhi in central defence and there was a recall for Aaron Ramsdale in goal. Scotland did not threaten at all in the first 45 minutes.

Maguire came on for Guéhi and the ridicule from the stands was immediate. It did not seem to affect him, at first. But as Clarke made tweaks with his substitutions, Scotland kicked out a foothold. Aaron Hickey had a shot blocked by Dunk and the stadium came alive when Maguire endured his horror moment.

Could Scotland summon an equaliser that had felt like a pipedream at the interval? John McGinn had the chance on 71 minutes, miscuing a header when well placed. Bellingham and Kane would slam the door shut.

Ewan Murray *Page 41* →

Scotland
3-4-2-1
Gunn; Porteous, Hendry, Tierney (S Armstrong 82); Hickey (Patterson 89), Gilmour (Dykes 60), McGregor (Jack 89), Robertson; McTominay, McGinn (Ferguson 82); Adams (Christie 59)

England
4-2-3-1
Ramsdale; Walker, Dunk, Guéhi (Maguire ht), Trippier; Phillips, Rice; Foden (Saka 71), Bellingham (Gallagher 84), Rashford (Eze 71); Kane (Wilson 84)

Referee Davide Massa (Ita)

Analysis
Barney Ronay *Hampden Park*



Dynamic duo give glimpse of England future, but will it be allowed to flourish?

How about this for a plan from this point on, however long the dog days of late Gareth England might last, no matter how powerful the temptation to keep it tight and win on the details? Nine times out of 10, just pick Bellingham and Foden. The 10th time, think about it, weigh the options, the need for caution and control and then just pick Bellingham and Foden again.

Sometimes talent ends the argument. And while it would of course be wrong to read too much into a lo-fi early-season nothing-game against moderate opponents, at times you simply have to believe the evidence of your eyes.

At Hampden Park both of England's most-gifted attacking midfielders started against a Scotland team England had been warned to be wary of, although on this evidence it wasn't immediately clear why or of what.

And at times in the first half there was a sense of something stirring here, of patterns emerging, England's two most talented attacking midfielders gambolling about the place with a sense of zip and glee and basic pleasure rarely associated with any England side in any of the preceding 150 years marked by this heritage friendly.

Never mind the past. Here is a little glimpse of the future. Or at least one version of it. Talent provides it own answers. But it is also a burden, responsibility to be discharged.

Will it be allowed to flourish? How far can we go with this? Will Southgate actually get the credit he deserves for giving these two wonderful players the balance in deep midfield to flourish?

Probably not. But this was a kind of progress from the trapped energy of Wroclaw, based around the added stability of fielding Kalvin Phillips and Declan Rice together in deep midfield.

> *Bellingham is so clearly the star of this England team, its most high-end part. Now we have a sword as well as a shield*

In front of that double pivot Bellingham, in particular, played like a high-spec six-litre footballing machine: super-mobile, physically dominant, taking the ball from any angle then surging off into the correct channel of space every time and just demonstrably the best player on the pitch.

As Scotland threatened (kind of) to level the game in the second half he produced an absurd, playground-style 360-degree spin, drive and pass to put Harry Kane in to make it 3-1, as the game would finish.

Bellingham was a little bit nasty too, shoving defenders away, trying to bulldoze through three players at a time, disrupting Scotland's composure at the start.

He is so clearly the star of this England team now, its most high-end part, the one player a high-class opposition will plan around, fear, make changes to combat. It is a genuine change of tone after six years as a highly competent unit. Now we have a sword as well as a shield.

Actually, make that two, because Foden was also excellent for an hour, gliding and twirling, funnelling the ball on in the same movement, a footballer who always seems to be running through lighter air.

Foden had been used as a stick with which to thrash Southgate over his selection of a conservative midfield for the Ukraine game. England's manager was prickly in the post-match exchanges, as he tends to be now, a little more steely, with his wire wool founding fathers' beard, adamant that the real issue isn't bravery or favouring his old lags, but balance, chemistry, structure.

And Southgate is of course right, just as he would be right to point out what happened at Hampden is that he created the architecture for that creative talent to function.

Southgate started Bellingham in the centre, his correct position in this team, any team; and Foden on the right with some freedom to drift a little.

England started well, decorating this 150th anniversary game with a genuinely urgent performance. Through the afternoon the pubs around Glasgow Central train station had been host to a select horde of travelling fans offering the usual public service warnings about the perils of the Irish Republican Army, the Luftwaffe, and the social fabric of their host nation, soundtrack to English football's cultural mission to the world. The years may pass. But the song remains the same.

And this was in its own way a perfect Britain: The Anger Years occasion. Now, who fancies a nice hot cup of The Past? Hampden did it nicely, with some cheery, under-stated pageantry. God Save The King was drowned out by a vast hail of boos which, purely as a piece of music, was arguably an upgrade. Flower of Scotland was met with a full round of jeering, taunting arms-wide fight gestures on both sides. Football heritage. This is what it looks like.

Just after the half-hour England scored a lovely opening goal, a four-man move that turned on Bellingham's delightful dinked pass to Marcus Rashford and a clever finish from Foden. Bellingham got the second after another excellent move. England dipped a little, then found their second wind. The balance was good here, Phillips a quiet source of strength, Bellingham the headline act. Can England stick with this? Is there anything to lose in simply going with the talent? This felt like a step closer.

▼ *Jude Bellingham keeps Scotland's Aaron Hickey (right) and Billy Gilmour busy*
EDDIE KEOGH/THE FA VIA GETTY IMAGES



'It is a joke' Southgate fury over treatment of defender

Jacob Steinberg
Hampden Park

Gareth Southgate hit out at the media's "ridiculous" treatment of Harry Maguire after the defender's troubles continued when he scored an own-goal during England's 3-1 friendly victory against Scotland at Hampden Park last night.

England's grip on the 150th anniversary fixture against their old rivals was briefly thrown into doubt when Maguire's moment of misfortune gave Scotland hope of mounting an unlikely comeback from 2-0 down during the second half. The Manchester United centre-back had come on as a substitute at half-time and soon heard his every touch being mocked by the home fans.

Maguire has fallen out of favour at United - he has not started a game for his club this season - and he looked rusty when he turned Andy Robertson's cross into his own net. But while the error raised more questions over Maguire's place as an England starter, Southgate's anger was clear as he praised the 30-year-old's resilience and claimed that the discourse around him has become a joke.

"From a Scotland fan's point of view I get it," England's head coach said. "I have no complaints with what they did. It is a consequence of ridiculous treatment of him for a long period of time, frankly, and I think our fans recognised, 'OK there might be a bit of heat from our own supporters but we are not going to have it from others getting into him.' But it is a joke. I have never known a player to be treated the way he is. Not from the Scottish fans - by our own commentators, pundits, whatever it is, they have created something that is beyond anything I have ever seen.

"He has been a stalwart for us in the second most successful English team for decades … and every time he goes on the field the resilience he shows is incredible and we are all with him. Our fans were brilliant with him tonight. I feel strongly about it."

Southgate, who has been loyal to Maguire, had no concerns over the defender's mental state. "He is good, he is great, we have had a good win and he was a big part of that. He has fronted up as he always does which is enormous credit to his character."

Southgate was happier talking about a fine display from England, who took control of the first half with goals from Jude Bellingham and Phil Foden. Bellingham later produced an assist for Harry Kane to kill off Scotland's challenge. "He was excellent," Southgate said.

> *'I have never known a player be treated in this way'*
> **Gareth Southgate**
> *England head coach*

The Guardian
Wednesday 13 September 2023
37

Out of action
Suspended Curry to miss games against Japan and Chile



Page 38 →

Quick return
Archer 'in a good place' as he trains with England

Page 39 →



Sport



Match report
Page 42 →

Scotland	England
1	3
Maguire 67 og	Foden 32, Bellingham 35, Kane 81

Same auld story
Bellingham shines as England beat Scotland

▲ Jude Bellingham celebrates scoring England's second goal against Scotland last night
ANDREW MILLIGAN/ PA WIRE

Halep given four-year ban for anti-doping violations

Sean Ingle

The former tennis world No 1 Simona Halep has been banned for four years for two intentional breaches of anti-doping rules, the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) has announced.

Halep, who won the French Open in 2018 and Wimbledon a year later, tested positive for the prohibited substance roxadustat at the US Open in 2022 and was also subsequently found to have irregularities in her athlete biological passport following the analysis of 51 blood samples.

Roxadustat is a substance used legitimately for the treatment of anaemia but it is on the World Anti-Doping Agency banned list because it is considered a blood-doping agent which increases haemoglobin and the production of red blood cells. The biological passport system monitors an athlete's blood indicators over a long period in order to identify irregularities that could indicate doping.

The 31-year-old Romanian announced in a statement that she would appeal against the decision, which is the biggest in the sport since Maria Sharapova, also a former Wimbledon champion and world No 1, was suspended for 15 months after testing positive for meldonium.

"Today, a tribunal under the tennis anti-doping programme announced a tentative decision in my case. The last year has been the hardest match of my life, and unfortunately my fight continues," said Halep. "I have devoted my life to the beautiful game of tennis.

"I take the rules that govern our sport very seriously and take pride in the fact I have never knowingly or intentionally used any prohibited substance. I refused to accept their decision of

37 →



Simona Halep tested positive for roxadustat at last year's US Open

G2

Too much too young



What I learned from talking to 10,000 children about pornography

The Guardian

Wednesday 13/09/23

Life & Arts

Tainted love

Is it wrong to have pets?

page 4



The neighbour from hell

Leila Latif reviews Living Next Door to Putin

page 10

A moment that changed me
I remarried my wife – four times, in four countries

Fleur Pierets was amazed at how little her straight friends knew about LGBTQ+ rights. But she knew just how to change that



Fleur (left) and Julian at their wedding in Antwerp

In 2017, my wife, Julian, and I were having dinner with friends when the conversation turned to same-sex marriage. "Not a problem any more, right?" one said, convinced that there were now equal rights for all. Over lentil stew, we had to tell them that, at the time, gay couples could get married in only 22 countries; to this day, homosexuality is criminalised in 64 and carries a possible or definite death sentence in 11.

As the conversation went from inequality to the latest Kara Walker exhibition, I started thinking: how could we get those numbers out there? Change starts with knowledge and it was clear our friends were shocked that my wife and I couldn't marry in more than 170 countries.

I went to the kitchen to prepare dessert. As I scooped chocolate ice-cream into bowls, an idea popped into my head.

In bed, after our guests had left, I whispered the idea to Julian, waking her up. "What if we got married in every country we're allowed to? Isn't marriage and love a perfect starting point to raise awareness?"

"Great idea, honey," she said, and went back to sleep.

When I woke the next morning, Julian was already calculating and listing the possibilities in a spreadsheet. We didn't have a lot of money, but we figured that, if we sold everything, we could have five weddings. So, we took a leap of faith. We ended up with one suitcase each, filled with the only belongings we hadn't flogged.

We had married in 2015, but we were committed to raising awareness about countries that would not allow same-sex marriage. As artists, we were accustomed to using our lives in our work. We were brave and enthusiastic – and very much in love, so nothing else really mattered.

That September, we officially started 22: The Project by getting married at the Marriage Bureau in New York. Our inbox exploded – every news and media outlet wanted to talk to us. We told a story of hope and inclusion and we were called role models. Julian and I then married in Amsterdam, Antwerp and Paris. After our fourth wedding in the project, she felt dizzy suddenly. She was diagnosed with multiple brain tumours and died six weeks later.

I was devastated. As soon as she was gone, I felt completely helpless. I stared blankly at the wall; walked in and out of the room in which she died. For those few weeks of her illness, I had been hypervigilant. Now, there was nothing left. Losing Julian was crippling; all I wanted to do was crawl into bed and never leave.

When she died, I was left with two suitcases and €125 in my bank account, so all I could do was keep working. I wrote a book, Julian, about our life together. Not long afterwards, a publisher asked if I was interested in writing a children's book about two women, Fleur and Julian, who marry in all the countries where same-sex marriage is allowed. In the resulting books, Love Around the World and Love Is Love, Julian doesn't die; they gave me the opportunity to finish the project, even if only on paper.

> "We were brave, enthusiastic and very much in love. Nothing else really mattered

When we started our wedding project, there were 22 countries in which we could get married. In January, that number will rise to 35. I still find it difficult to look back, because the project reminds me of happier times and I miss Julian like crazy. But I also know that we started a lot of really important conversations in the countries we visited. The project was a success – even if we weren't able to finish it.

It has been five and a half years since Julian's death. I am still passionate about championing equality – and committed to doing something about it. Who knows, maybe some day, over lentil stew, a crazy new idea to raise awareness about same-sex marriage might pop into my mind.

Julian by Fleur Pierets, translated by Elisabeth Khan, is published by 3TimesRebel Press (£12.99). To order a copy for £11.43, go to guardianbookshop.com. Delivery charges may apply.

PHOTOGRAPH: WIM VAN CAPPELLEN

Arwa Mahdawi



What is behind the great American laxative shortage?

American exceptionalism strikes again, this time in the pharmaceutical aisle. According to a recent article in the Wall Street Journal, the US is having a love affair with laxatives; Americans of all ages are ingesting so much of the stuff that there are now shortages nationwide.

"It's crazy to think that our collective bowel dysfunction problems have gotten so bad that we're running out of stool softeners," Dr George Pavlou, head of the Gastroenterology Associates of New Jersey, told the WSJ.

If you are feeling embarrassed or slightly icky about the subject, let me reassure you that digestive issues are very on-trend. Gone are the days when you couldn't mention flatulence or constipation in polite society without someone piping up and saying: "Excuse me, you're spoiling my dinner." Now, everyone wants to discuss their guts in gruesome detail.

TikTok is flooded with influencers promising weird and wacky methods to hack your gut health and videos with the hashtag #GutTok have amassed hundreds of millions of views. Then there are BuzzFeed lists such as 10 Signs You're a Hot Girl With Stomach Issues which are inspired by trending hashtags like #HotGirlsHaveStomachProblems and #hotgirlshaveibs (IBS being irritable bowel syndrome). Hot girls, as you've probably gathered, have a lot of tummy problems.

> "Anxiety often manifests itself in stomach problems

What about all the hot boys, you may be wondering? How are their tummies? While I don't have a definitive answer for that, studies suggest that IBS is more common in women than men. Women are certainly more likely to open up about it on TikTok. Women are also more vulnerable to disordered eating than men, which can lead to digestive problems and result in laxative abuse.

Disordered eating isn't the only factor feeding into a boom in bowel problems. Our guts and brains are connected and anxiety often manifests itself in stomach issues. The pandemic has obviously taken a big toll on our collective mental health and that has filtered down to our gut health.

Of course, there is a more obvious culprit: the food we eat. Many of us eat a lot of crap because that is what tends to be convenient, cheap, and tasty. Ultra-processed food (UPFs) make up 57% of the UK diet; among children and lower-income people that number is as high as 80%. The UK is outdone only by the US: UPFs make up 73% of the US food supply, according to Northeastern University's Network Science Institute, and provide the average adult with more than 60% of their daily calories.

Our ultra-processed diets are resulting in more than an uptick in laxative use and cutesy colon-focused social media hashtags; the US and UK are also seeing a significant rise in bowel cancer in people under 50. While this disturbing trend may have flown under the radar for a while, it got mainstream attention after the tragic death of 43-year-old Black Panther actor Chadwick Boseman in 2020. To be very clear: nobody is entirely sure what is behind the increase in colon cancer rates among young people and a number of factors are probably at play. Still, it seems likely that a diet high in processed food is a risk factor for the disease.

Don't worry, this isn't a lecture on how you ought to be cultivating a healthy gut by subsisting on homegrown kale and thrice-filtered spring water. Nope, that advice is Gwyneth Paltrow's domain.

I'm just here to say that a nationwide shortage of stool softeners isn't normal. The fact that #HotGirlsHaveStomachProblems is a trending hashtag isn't normal. I'm glad that frank discussions of digestive issues have become normalised, but we should all be concerned about why stomach problems are now so ubiquitous. Don't let all the hot girl hashtags lull you into a sense of complacency: if you're worried about your bowel movements go to the doctor. Trust your gut, not TikTok.

You too can be a star. All you need is a famous father

The year is 2223. You flick on your virtual reality entertainment centre to unwind. A hologram of Jamie Oliver's great-great-great-grandson appears; he's chirpily demonstrating a recipe for a pukka insect-based dish. You change the channel and come across Phil Collins's great-great-great-granddaughter in a sitcom called Emily in Mars. You change the channel again and are confronted with a film directed by a Coppola.

I obviously don't know what the future is going to look like, but the way that things are going it seems that generational fame has become the new generational wealth. "Nepo babies" have been a hot topic for a while now but the issue received renewed interest this week after it was revealed that Oliver's 12-year-old son has landed a cooking show on the BBC. This news broke shortly after Adam Sandler's decision to cast his two teenage daughters in his latest film, You Are So Not Invited to My Bat Mitzvah, raised eyebrows.

I'm not criticising the kids; they are making use of the opportunities they were given. Still, it does feel as if every other person in the creative industries these days is the offspring of someone famous. And while these kids may be talented, that doesn't detract from the fact that there are plenty of talented people without famous parents or the connections who will never get a foot in the door. Even if they do get a foot in the door, they might not be able to afford to prise it open. Creative work is precarious and poorly paid; without a financial safety net, it can be hard to find the time to hone your craft.

This is what people are angry about. They don't resent the individuals, they resent the system. Creative work shouldn't be a privileged path that only the rich and connected can afford to tread. Yet that is increasingly what it is. And the arts are all the poorer for it.



Generational fame … Buddy and Jamie Oliver



№ 4,609

Slow dumping

Age: The term may be new, but slow dumping has been going on for ever.

What is it? I'm really hoping it isn't to do with the digestive process? No! Dumping as in ending a relationship.

Phew! And slow as in the opposite of fast? Exactly.

Not unlike the slow fade? That's more about pulling away gradually during dating. A slow dump happens in an established relationship.

Let them down gradually, so it's not a sudden blow? Not exactly. It's when one partner distances themselves, physically and emotionally, from a romantic relationship, rather than openly communicating a desire to end it.

Hmm, put like that, it doesn't sound like such a good thing. "It's a passive and cowardly way of ending a relationship that can be very hurtful for the receiver," Nia Williams told Metro.

And Nia knows because? Because she is founder of a dating coaching service called Miss Date Doctor.

Is it best just to send a text: "u r dumped"? No. Although Katy Perry says that Russell Brand ended their relationship by text. And Simon Cowell, Ariana Grande and Charlie Sheen have all claimed they have been dumped by text.

And Daniel Day-Lewis? No, he was the dumper, not the dumpee, and it was by fax, which is a way of communication from the olden days. Phil Collins, incidentally, denies breaking up with his wife by fax.

Still, rather that than a ghosting, or one of these so-called slow dumps. Out of interest, how do you know if it is happening to you? Asking for a friend … The signs of a slow dump can include reduced communication, avoiding quality time together, emotional detachment and a growing sense of distance.

Now I'm worried. Aren't they just symptoms of a long-term relationship? They can happen naturally or can "be symptomatic of personal stress, anxiety, depression, or other issues in the relationship that need addressing", says Williams.

"Addressing." That's the key, right? Right. Don't jump to conclusions. "It's crucial to initiate an open conversation," says Williams. "Express your concerns and seek clarity."

But what if that is what's going on, and I am – I mean my friend is – being slow dumped? It's probably better to know. Also, look on the bright side: they are a cruel coward (and are almost certainly cheating on you). You're better off without them.

Do say: "There are plenty more fish in the sea …"

Don't say: "Actually, there aren't, haven't you seen Seaspiracy?"

COVER: AGNÈS RICART/THE GUARDIAN

Is it wrong to have pets?

The animals we love, feed and shelter are often miserable and frustrated - or so say a surprising number of experts. **Ellie Violet Bramley** reports



Troy Vettese has a parrot in his family. She gets paid a lot of attention, but she wants more. Parrots are clever and social. Vettese says: "She needs to be entertained all the time, otherwise she really is suffering." He sees a possible different life for her: "She could be living with her friends and family in a forest, very happy - but she's not, and that's unfair to her."

If that sounds sensible, but you don't see what it has to do with the fluffy, well-exercised and frequently fed love of your life at home, bear with me. Of course, when it comes to owning pets, there are varying shades of grey. On one end of the spectrum: the poor snake I spotted at a party recently, being worn as a necklace. At the other might be your rescue pup, or my rescue cats, one with a damaged cerebellum and the other with one eye; they wouldn't have survived long on the streets. But I still find myself wondering whether it is fair keeping them at all.

We may think that we are giving our companions rounded lives and putting them first when we rise early for walkies or clean up another accident. But Vettese, an environmental historian who specialises in animal studies, says the suffering of his family's much-loved bird is evidence that pet ownership is not about the animals.

"If people really cared about animals, we would only engage in rescues and helping animal sanctuaries' wildlife rehabilitation - things that we find fulfilling, but that also help the animal," he says. Instead, "we only like relationships where they are easy, where the pets are well maintained, where we can hire a dog walker, where it impinges as little as possible on our life and we are extracting as much emotional support as we want from them". To his mind, it is definitely "a very selfish relationship".

Trends in pet ownership could be taken as evidence of this: 24% of all owners in the UK got their pet in the past two years, with a total of 5.4m pets acquired since 2020, according to a recent report by the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals. During Covid lockdowns, people were bored at home, allowed out only to take walks - on which a dog provided company. In the immediate aftermath, as people went back to work and realised a musclebound American bully XL dog wasn't going to love being alone in a flat all day, lots of animal shelters were overrun; many continue to be, as a consequence of the cost of living crisis.

But, at least in the "traditional west", keeping animals such as dogs and cats seems to be the norm, says Jessica du Toit, a doctoral student in philosophy at Western University in Ontario who studies animal ethics. She grew up with pets and takes every chance she can to spend time with her parents' elderly dog, Oliver. In fact, she says, "so many people nowadays consider these animals to be their companions, or a part of their respective families, that we have things such as Uber Pet [which allows you to order a taxi that will take you and your four-legged friend]; restaurants, hotels and workplaces stating that they are pet-friendly; and people earning good incomes as pet walkers, pet sitters and pet psychologists".

Jessica Pierce, a bioethicist and the author of Run, Spot, Run: The Ethics of Keeping Pets, says: "We're at a really weird place, and definitely a place that is unlike any we've been in the past." She cites a new report on the pet industry in the US that puts the figure of US households with pets at 75%: "That's unbelievable!"

It isn't just the scale of pet ownership that has mushroomed in recent years, Pierce says, but also what she describes as the "intensity" of pet ownership: "They are much more intensively captive than they have been in the past." She takes the example of dogs, which, in general, "have less and less freedom to move around the world and be dogs".

> **We only like relationships that are easy, that impinge as little as possible on our lives**

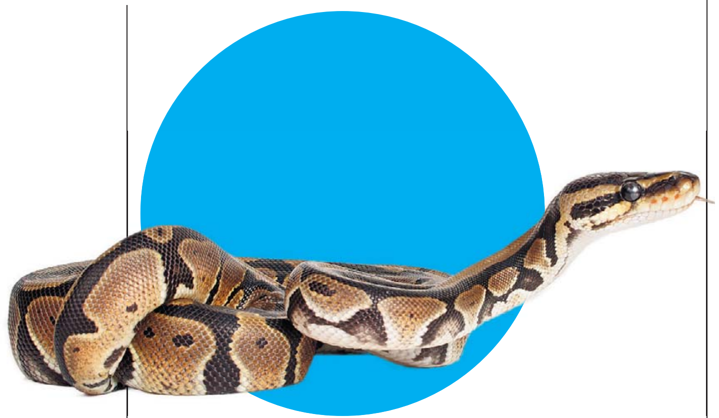
The way we breed animals now - for traits that we find cute, docile or hypoallergenic - is at dizzying new heights. "Dogs and cats are more and more treated like objects, products, a substrate, not like beings," says Pierce, who grew up with dogs, cats and "a bunch of other pets". It was when history repeated itself and her young daughter had her own menagerie that she "started to really look at the ethics of it". She points to breeds such as "pugs and boxers, which have lifelong quality-of-life compromises".

Then there are the ways they are much more intensely "ours" than once they might have been - another member of the family in a way that is loving, but not very *animal*. Our pets have become like our children. We buy them bow ties for their birthday and take them for tea-tree oil pawdicures. Professionals paint portraits of them to hang on our walls, or we do it ourselves; I spent a particularly silly afternoon creating lino likenesses of my cats.

The global pet industry is vast - worth $320bn, according to one report - and increasingly humanised; products cash in on our desire to spoil animals and shower them with a very human, consumerist kind of love. The psychology is complicated, and pet owners might feel they are indulging their animals, but how much is that high-concept toy really about your hamster?

"The level of emotional





'Dogs have less and less freedom to be dogs,' says bioethicist Jessica Pierce



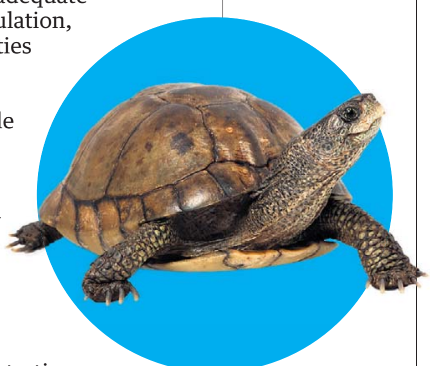
dependence humans have on their companion animals is different from any time in the past," says Pierce. "People are seeing dogs as emotional aids, whether or not they are officially therapy animals." This is, she thinks, taking its toll. If you look at veterinary literature, she says, the levels of "acute anxiety in dogs are off the charts".

We are asking animals to fill a very human need, says Vettese: "People are looking for unconditional love." But that love "is predicated on this absolute domination of the pet's life - what they eat, their sexuality, their love, their activity - and you can't disentangle these two things". If pets had more autonomy, he says, "they would not necessarily have this unconditional love".

For pet owners, this is an uncomfortable concept. Would my cats still nuzzle me with wild abandon if I weren't such a reliable cat-treat dispenser? I shudder at the thought.

"The problem with unconditional love," says Ed Winters, the author of This Is Vegan Propaganda (And Other Lies the Meat Industry Tells You), is that it comes at a price. "How are they going to feel when we go into the shop and they're whining at the door? They've become so reliant on us that even just a few hours of separation can cause distress." He has only ever had one pet - a hamster called Rupert whose personality was so winning that he was a catalyst for Winters to become vegan.

Even if our pets aren't depressed, perhaps they aren't living their best lives. "There are certainly some animals who do very well in the care of certain human beings," says Du Toit. "But many human beings, even when they are kind and conscientious custodians of their animals, underestimate the needs and desires of their companions." Even if you have the basics covered, "most dogs and cats also need adequate cognitive stimulation, and opportunities for play and socialisation with compatible conspecifics [animals of the same species] if they are to have minimally decent lives." Without it, she says, they experience frustration, loneliness and sometimes separation anxiety.



"The boredom of animals is intense," says Vettese. He looks to parrots again - two in five African grey parrots exhibit "feather-damaging behaviour", or plucking themselves, out of boredom. Fish are increasingly thought to be bored or stressed by tank life. My cats have a garden and toys in the shape of mackerel to play with, but I would hazard that they would cause a lot less "mischief" if I had more time to better occupy them with feline-oriented games.

Regarding uncaged domesticated animals, Pierce still says that "captivity is the main ethical problem … because even dogs and cats are captive in important ways and captivity has a whole range of physiological and neurological ill effects on animal brains and bodies". Cats are often free to come and go as they please - mine frequently do, coming back smelling of smoke and other people's perfume - but, when push comes to shove, they are captive broadly to my will. That said, Pierce argues that "agency and a really broad sense of control over their own lives" counteracts at least some of the negativity of captivity for dogs and cats.



There are other ethical acrobatics involved in pet ownership. Take the damage pets do to other animals and habitats. Cats, for instance, kill a huge amount of wildlife and have contributed to the extinction of 63 species worldwide. Then there is their carbon footprint. While we are increasingly aware of how our diets affect the planet, Winters argues that we view our pets separately; I can't be the only pescatarian who feeds their cat meat. It might not always be thus - according to the largest study to date, vegan diets are healthier and safer for dogs than conventional meat-based diets, as long as they are nutritionally complete. But if US pets were a country, they would rank fifth globally for meat consumption, ahead of Germany.

So, is there a way to own pets ethically? Yes and no, Pierce says. "There's no such thing as perfect … but we can do our best and do pretty well." She has a dog called Bella - "a mix of some sort … she's super-cute" - who has some physical disabilities, "so she can't walk very well, but she has a lot of fun in life". They take her hiking in a backpack. Taking care of her is, she says, a big responsibility; Pierce feels constantly as though she is not doing enough for her. Whereas previously she thought Bella had behavioural issues, she now sees that it is her job to adapt more thoughtfully to her needs "and not make her do all the work".

It would be good, says Pierce, "to see us doing more work to adapt ourselves to our dogs". Take our homes: it should be obvious, she thinks, when we enter the house of someone who has dogs or cats. "Let it be a house full of dog, with beds that smell like the dog, because that's going to be comfortable for the dog. Toys lying around, hair on the couch, muddy footprints."

Adopting animals from shelters rather than buying from breeders is one obvious step, but perhaps we need to reframe our relationship with pets altogether. "We understand that they have emotions and thoughts, because that's one of the ways that we find them wonderful companions," says Pierce. "But we fail to see them for who they are. We see them for who we *think* they are, who we *want* them to be." I can't honestly deny the joy of seeing a yorkshire terrier dressed as Wonder Woman, but I am pretty sure it's not a dog's idea of a good time.

Du Toit makes a distinction between owning pets and keeping them. The former, she argues, may "foster or reinforce problematic attitudes towards the animals we keep as companions … we are very unlikely to think of ourselves as having onerous moral duties to that which is our property". By shifting our thinking and language to "'caring for' or 'keeping' companion animals" says Du Toit, "we are much more likely to treat our companion animals in a manner that is appropriate, given their inherent moral worth".



PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES

'It popped up on my screen. I really didn't like it'



Children are growing up online, just a few clicks away from explicit content. **Abbey Wright** asked 10,000 of them a simple question – what do you think about pornography?

Between 2016 and 2022, I spoke to about 10,000 children and young people aged between six and 22 about the impact of pornography on their lives. These children were from right across the whole of the UK and a range of backgrounds. I met children in classrooms, youth theatres and clubs; I travelled to Dundee, Cornwall, Derby, Pembrokeshire and Newcastle.

I am a theatre director and maker and undertook this research as part of the creation of two new musicals – Why Is the Sky Blue? (Southwark Playhouse) and You Don't Beed to Make a Big Song and Dance Out of It (National Theatre Connections festival) – made with my brilliant collaborators Matt Regan and Shireen Mula, and produced by Tackroom.

I sought advice and support from Barnardo's about how to broach this thorny subject with children and young people. When I stepped into a room with six-year-olds, I would ask: "What is good about the internet?" and then "What is bad about the internet?" I was very careful not to use the "P" word or to introduce the subject. With older groups (14-plus), I would begin by asking an open question such as: "What do you think about pornography?" And I would follow the track of their conversation, being careful not to judge or influence them.

In meeting so many children and young people and hearing them speak about their experiences, I became aware of how vast and complex this subject is. My fear is that early and repeated exposure to pornography is harmful to human connection and love. I also worry that it is going under the radar; we need to be unafraid to speak to children about pornography, and to find a language for it.

Here is what I discovered …

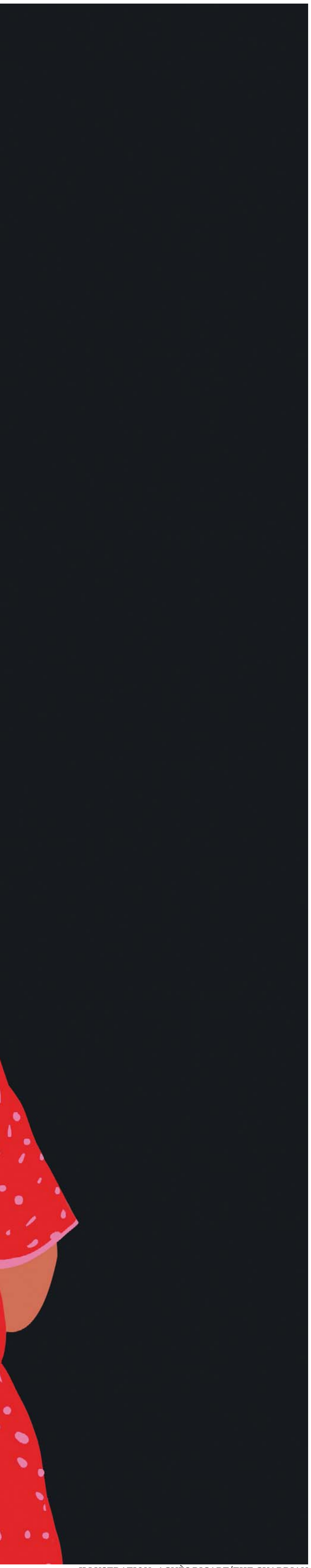


ILLUSTRATION: AGNÈS RICART/THE GUARDIAN

1 Children as young as six are encountering pornography

Whenever I mention to the parent of a child that age that many six-year-olds have seen pornography, they say: "Oh, my child hasn't." Well, as a teenager from Chichester said: "If you put a phone in a child's hand, you are putting porn in a child's hand … don't do it unless you are ready to speak to them about pornography." I was shocked to discover that it is common for children aged six to encounter pornography online. This would often be pop-ups, or through being introduced to it by an older friend or sibling.

I remember the first time I heard a six-year-old tell me about her experience of seeing pornography. She described it as seeing something "inappropriate" online. The word "inappropriate" was one I heard a lot during these conversations; I imagine children had been told by adults that something was "inappropriate" and they used the word back to me. She said she "really didn't like it" but it had "just popped up" and she tried to do something else until it finished; "when something like that pops up, I just do my colouring in", she said.

I met many children her age who had similar experiences. A classroom of seven-year-old boys in Edinburgh told me: "There's a naked picture and she's trying to run away. It's not her fault but she doesn't want it and she's wearing nail polish and her nails are all scratchy." The experience of watching such young children raising their hands to describe pornography was surreal. They used the kind of simple words a seven-year-old would use, but their analysis of pornography was spot on: they were observing the lack of consent and objectification of the woman. One boy told me he wouldn't speak to a parent or teacher about it because he would "get told off", but that it wasn't his fault, that it had "just popped up".

2 For nine- to 11-year-olds, exposure to pornography is frequent

When I spoke to older primary schoolchildren aged between nine and 11, it became apparent that many children in this age group were familiar with "rude things on the internet". An eight-year-old girl in Stoke-on-Trent told me: "I've been on YouTube and they've just come along. I like going on YouTube and watching videos of how to make slime. You see pictures of people with no clothes and I think - why on earth would that be on the internet? Why would people put it on there, because if people knew little children - four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10 - would see it, wouldn't they be a bit embarrassed?"

One 14-year-old in Dundee told me: "My dad is a teacher at a primary school and he said that it's getting worse and worse because young children are getting phones. He said he has to deal with Primary 5 [children aged eight to nine years old] sending pictures of pornography and he gets quite upset when he talks about it." Another 14-year-old in the same conversation added: "At my sister's primary school, they had to ban the kids from the internet because Primary 5 were watching things like that." Teachers told me they took tablets away from children for the same reason.

3 I met a 12-year-old boy who was dealing with pornography addiction

I was particularly struck by a conversation I had with a boy in London. The 12-year-old told me that he had been addicted to pornography but that his dad was "helping him through it". He had been watching pornography "several times a day".

When I asked Helen, a pornographic actor from Surrey, how she felt about the fact that children are watching pornography, she said: "It worries me. I worry that that could be a very damaging thing. Children do not have the context to understand that pornography isn't real."

4 Teenagers are learning more from pornography than sex education classes

Sex education in schools was universally ridiculed by the young people I spoke to as just not very helpful or entirely lacking. It ranged from 90s-style videos replete with metaphors such as "a man dusting a woman with a feather duster", or "a boy with fireworks in his trousers", to the religious - "the Virgin Mary didn't have to do it so neither do you; a testicle is the same size as a walnut - celibacy is fun; here - have a Bible."

One 18-year-old told me: "For biology GCSE, we had to know about vaginal intercourse. It didn't talk about gay sex. I had never had any education on gay male sex or gay female sex. I didn't actually find out until I was 14 how gay men had sex and I was like - ooohhh."

As one 16-year-old said: "Adults are generally terrified of talking to young people about porn. Your parents have had you from a baby and they want to hold on to that innocent version of you."

As a parent myself, I fully sympathise with how delicate this is. But in the conversations I had, I found a lot of children and young people who really wanted to talk to adults about pornography, sex and relationships.

5 For young people exploring their sexuality, pornography can end up filling gaps in their education

As a 14-year-old boy from Derby explained, it can be a source of information or even consolation: "Whenever porn is discussed, everything is negative. But there may be an act happening in the video where it can make you feel less alone. I'm gay and I remember the first time I allowed myself to watch the ones I wanted to watch instead of the women. It was a massive relief, it felt amazing."

> **If you put a phone in a child's hand, you're putting porn in their hand**

I spoke to a 19-year-old transgender man in Liverpool who was of south-east Asian heritage. He described his ambivalence towards pornography: "It usually fetishises both the trans bit and the race bit. It's not the most flattering depiction in some ways, but at least it's *a* depiction. I can look and see - OK - *how* might I go about trying to get off with someone? Or, you know, that's what top surgery looks like - so that's going to be me. There isn't anywhere else I can go to learn this stuff."

6 Pornography is confusing the issue of consent

Most of the young women I spoke to had experienced problems with consent. This would often revolve around young men performing sexual acts they had seen in pornography without asking, and young women feeling unable to express that, while they might consent to some of the acts, they didn't consent to others.

Young women told us about the pressure they felt from pornography. "Why can't you do this? Why won't you do that? These porn women do it, so why won't you?" One young woman told us how shocked an ex-partner had been by her pubic hair. "He was genuinely astonished. He couldn't believe it."

7 Pornography use doesn't always conform to gender stereotypes

It can be quite difficult to avoid falling into binary heteronormative ways of speaking while talking about pornography, because it plays into gender stereotypes. It is important to state those stereotypes but also to subvert them. I met young women addicted to porn; I met young men who had never watched it.

One young woman in her early 20s told me that, in the summer between college and university, she had watched pornography every day. She said: "There is this image of the woman being like: 'Ooh, I'm not as sexual as men,' and it's taboo for the woman to be a sexual being. So porn perpetuates that - our inability to feel comfortable to say: 'Oh yeah, we masturbate.' In the porn that infiltrates the mainstream conversation, with big boobs and submissive women, a lot of women don't think it is *for* them. So they don't realise what exists, and you have to hunt around. There is more ethical stuff designed for women's pleasure, but it's probably about 1% of the porn on the internet and it's tucked away."

Many boys had a complex relationship with pornography and a strong sense of self-awareness about it. An 18-year-old man from London said: "I think pornography is a bit soul-sucking. It is dangerous. I say to my friends: 'Try and go five days without it.' I know my friends have tendencies with pornography that they can't get out of. It drains people physically and spiritually. People can't do anything else. I don't want to get to a point where I feel like I'm not me any more."

8 For many young people, pornography is their introduction to sex

A 20-year-old man from Cardiff spoke to me about how pornography can shape your sexual preferences. "I found it was a gateway to my sexuality," he said. "I was exposed to porn before I'd had a proper sexual experience - it is like a self-fulfilling prophecy. You see something and you re-enact it. That's what I like because that's what I did. That's what I did because that's what I saw. It gives you expectations about sex: 'sexpectations'."

9 Pornography is stopping young people from connecting in the real world

The idea that pornography stopped people from connecting with one another seemed to be at the core of this huge, sprawling conversation. A 16-year-old boy in Truro told me: "It shuts you down and closes you off. You put yourself in a bubble. Girlfriends or boyfriends are complicated but with pornography, it is two clicks away, it's whatever you want whenever you want and it can be done on your own, without anybody else; you never have to leave the house. You don't have to put yourself out there for rejection. But I think that does make young people less skilled socially and it does mean you can get more and more anxious about going out and meeting real people."

10 Very little is known about the effect pornography is having on young people

As another young person from Birmingham put it: "We don't know the consequences of this generation growing up watching pornography. Nobody really knows yet quite how big it is."

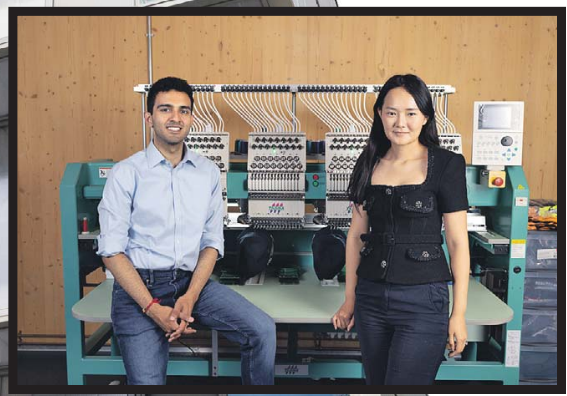
One thing is for sure: if we want to find out more to help young people, we need to listen to this generation, who understand the internet way better than we do.

G2 The Guardian Wednesday 13 September 2023









A far cry from a draughty shed … the £5m Workstack building and its happy tenants; above, Besbike; below, Mentsen; right, Healthy Bean

'Space like this is so rare'

Huge numbers of vital workshops have been lost to the march of luxury flats. But one architect is creating affordable spaces by building upwards - with wood. **Oliver Wainwright** pulls on his overalls and investigates

A stack of blocks teeters on the side of a busy road in Charlton, London, like a pile of shipping containers freshly offloaded from the nearby Thames. It is an arresting sight in this area of builders' merchants and big box retail stores, each block thrusting out above the one below as if the whole pile might topple any minute. A roadside facade of dark grey corrugated metal suggests it has an industrial function, while the ends of the blocks gleam with translucent polycarbonate, giving it the look of a rock that has been sliced open to reveal its sparkly crystal innards.

"We wanted to create an eye-catching beacon," says Michael Finlay, standing outside the new £5m Workstack. "It's a marker to say that space for making is here to stay - and we're not giving in to the march of developers and their luxury flats."

Finlay is the founding director of the Greenwich Enterprise Board, a not for profit provider of affordable workspace for small businesses in the area, which has been battling since the 1980s to retain a toehold for manufacturing against the relentless tide of residential development. The odds are stacked against it. Land with permission for housing can be four times more valuable than that for industrial use. So it's easy to see why landowners along the river are keen to cash in, and why the aspirational towers on the horizon are creeping ever closer, hawking their high-end waterside lifestyle concepts in between the concrete plants and asphalt depots.

"Huge swathes of workspace have been lost," says Finlay. "We feel like we're the one with our finger in the dyke." An independent commission last year found that London had lost a quarter of its industrial floorspace over the last two decades - adding up to 6 million square metres, the equivalent of 840 football pitches. Much of this land was supposed to be protected for industrial use, but with ambitious housing targets to reach, planners have been all too happy to see it converted. The result is that the capital's thriving ecology of makers and manufacturers - the kinds of small businesses that need studios and workshops - is pushed ever further out, or banished altogether.

Workstack is a smart answer to the problem. By stacking the 14 units vertically, rather than housing them in the usual sprawling single-storey shed, they have a much smaller footprint, making the valuable land work harder. The staggered form also maximises the space up top: the studios are progressively cantilevered out as they rise from the compact base, which also helps to shade the floors below from the sun and provide a sheltered zone for deliveries. Designed by dRMM architects, and partly funded by the Mayor of London's Good Growth fund, it demonstrates how space for manufacturing could be eminently combined with a residential development - and make so-called "mixed use" mean more than just coffee shops and yoga studios.

"London is in danger of turning into a monoculture," says architect Alex de Rijke. "It always used to be a place of 'living above the shop', or the workshop, but it has become so atomised. We can imagine a version of this building that includes live-work too, as the units are designed to be adaptable."

Workstack is constructed from big sheets of cross-laminated timber (CLT), a material De Rijke has been championing since 2006, when dRMM designed a music and sports hall for Kingsdale school a few miles away. Here, it feels like walking around a supersized plywood model, with all the wooden walls and ceilings left exposed and dotted blue rubber covering the floors. The naturally ventilated units have big openable windows, while services are housed in simple metal trunking, with micro kitchens tucked inside free-standing cupboards. A large freight lift connects the floors, along with a metal mesh staircase - one of the few non-timber elements in the building, required for fire safety reasons. The resulting spaces are warm, quiet and a far cry from the draughty sheds that many of the tenants have worked in until now.

"Space like this is so rare to find in London," says Risa Sano, one half of Mentsen furniture design studio,

PHOTOGRAPHS: GRAEME ROBERTSON/THE GUARDIAN

> **We are looking for a bigger place – and the beauty of this building is that we can just move upstairs**

which occupies one of the larger upstairs units. They have kitted out their space with a professional wood workshop on one side, where neat racks of Japanese carpentry tools line the walls, and a design studio on the other, where shelves brim with delicate paper maquettes of their furniture designs. "We were in a cold Victorian schoolhouse in Waterloo for seven years," she says, "then we got kicked out to make way for a big residential development. We moved somewhere else but immediately got pushed on by another development. We were searching for ages, but proper workshops tend to be too big and expensive, while smaller units tend to be offices, so they don't want noise and dust."

The duo had considered the nearby Greenwich Design District, a purpose-built creative quarter at the heart of a steroidal luxury housing enclave on the Greenwich peninsula, conceived by Hong Kong developer Knight Dragon. But they were quickly put off. "It felt really forced as a commercially-minded 'creative space'," says Yasuyuki Sakurai. "They offered us cheap rents initially, but the service charge would have been twice as much as the rent." Workstack units cost £19-£24 per sq ft, with a service charge of around £3.50 per sq ft – considerably less than similar properties in London.

On the floor below we find Healthy Bean, an unlikely named workwear and PPE distributor, busily embroidering the logos of a local authority on to navy sweatshirts using its whirring ranks of computerised embroidery machines.

"We were working remotely before," says co-founder Cindy Yao, "and we had a warehouse that we rarely visited. But here we can now do everything in-house, which gives us better lead times and quality control." They moved into Workstack in April and are already outgrowing their unit. "We're looking for a bigger space," says Dalwinder Uppal. "But the beauty of this building is that we can just move upstairs."

Down on the ground floor, where the building spills on to the street refreshingly free of the usual security fence of an industrial compound, Alex Tung is busy fiddling with a bicycle battery, surrounded by an assortment of electric bikes. His company, Besbike, converts regular push-bikes into electric-powered versions. "I started off in a small space near Greenwich station," he says. "But being here gives me more capacity to store bikes, and being on the ground floor with a big roller shutter door makes it really easy to bring stock in and out." His garage-like space is one of the few to be made of painted blockwork walls, braced with a slender steel frame, forming a structural "table" on which the CLT structure stands – partly for the fire safety strategy, which was coordinated, along with the structure, by engineering giant Arup.

Since the recent rise of structural mass timber, with wooden high-rise buildings competing to win the "plyscraper" crown, some fire experts have expressed alarm that the boosterism of the industry might be overshadowing potential safety risks. Unlike steel or concrete, in a CLT building, the structure itself is a potential source of fuel, making it complex to predict how it will behave in the event of a fire.

"Timber is a fantastic material," says Rory Hadden, a lecturer in fire investigation at the University of Edinburgh, "with benefits like low embodied carbon and better indoor air quality. But a lot of substantive issues are being swept under the carpet by the timber evangelists. I think we still need a lot more research before we start building complex buildings with CLT. You don't build with something when you're still trying to understand how it works."

Judith Schultz, fire safety engineer at Arup, agrees that there is much over-simplification in the industry, but assures that the Workstack project was engineered from first principles with the fire brigade, alongside Swiss consultancy Ignis. Particular focus was given to the panel connections and the details of doors and service penetrations, with all doors and walls designed to a 60-minute rating, and exposed CLT treated to control the surface spread of flame. "The crucial thing is that it all depends on the building's location and use," says Schultz. "Just because it's done a certain way here doesn't mean you can do it the same way elsewhere. You can't just apply current standards to complex buildings like this."

Finlay and De Rijke hope Workstack will serve as a proof of concept, opening people's eyes to what manufacturing space can look like. "Developers often say that industrial space is ugly and going to spoil their outlook," says Finlay. "But I think most local communities would be pleased to have something like this in their midst."

A sleek vertical hive of bike repairs, furniture making, clothing alteration and – soon to come – Korean food production sounds like a dream neighbour to me.

PHOTOGRAPHS: © STUDIOKNXX; HARRY DEADMAN



'I'll take it' … one of the performers in the film by Julianknxx, below

Drifters and dreamers

Julianknxx toured Europe asking Black people to perform for his camera. He tells **Tshepo Mokoena** why one woman refused to do anything but sleep

To make his latest work, poet and film-maker Julian Knox went on quite a journey – literally. The artist, who styles his name as Julianknxx, visited nine European port cities – Lisbon, Hamburg, Berlin, Marseille, Antwerp, Barcelona, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and London – and in each one collected what he calls "encounters" with Black residents there.

"Some people read a poem, some sang, some danced," the 36-year-old says. An artist in Berlin would only let him film her while she slept – "'cos I'm tired of talking about Blackness and want to rest," he remembers her saying. He giggles: "The offering could be whatever it is. I couldn't say no."

Chorus in Rememory of Flight is set to debut at the Barbican in London this week. Well, it will when Knox has finished the poems he's writing for it. When we meet, a few weeks before the exhibition opens, he is still applying the finishing touches. In their central London office and workspace, editor Harry Deadman sits at a desk in the corner with headphones on, silently sequencing the show's main film. Knox shows me some of a rough cut featuring sweeping shots over cityscapes, spliced with scenes of the artists, choirs and locals – many of them now friends – whom he and his research team met during the journey.

> Their offerings could be whatever they wanted. I couldn't say no

The idea for Chorus in Rememory of Flight came to Knox in 2021 when he was collaborating with choirs and dancers for his Black Corporeal series, which blended poetry, live singing and films into an exploration of Blackness and belonging. Knox has first-hand experience of a shifting notion of home: he is Sierra Leonean, and fled the early 1990s civil war with family to spend a few years in Gambia before settling in London as a teen.



The new installation's title comes from two books: Lorna McDaniel's Praisesongs in Rememory of Flight and Paule Marshall's novel Praisesong for the Widow. "The whole thing is stitched together as a chorus: the songs people gave as offering to me," he says. But you also get conversations and monologues about what it means to set down new roots in Europe from academic George Shire and musician Thabo Mkwananzi, both Zimbabwean, as well as an incredibly charming Black American tour guide in Marseille. "It's all mixed in as one chorus. The 'rememory' part is this idea of listening practice. Of sitting down with people and saying, 'Whatever it is you'll offer, I'll take.'"

The poems, once they're ready ("I finished one last night!"), will join shorter films playing on seven screens as you move through the Barbican's Curve gallery. Knox's installations can feel like a mix of cinema and profoundly moving history lesson. He's come a long way since reading his poetry aloud at university African Caribbean Society events. His work has been in the Gagosian and the Whitechapel in London and Lisbon's Gulbenkian, as well as the odd fashion event. Barbican senior curator Eleanor Nairne says she was "blown away by the lyricism of his film-making" after first visiting his studio, and feels inspired by "the sheer scale of Julian's imagination" now.

The London section of Knox's new film focuses on the financial Square Mile. "I'm looking at how it played such a big part in the slave trade and the movement of people," he says. "And how it still has its own government now. Money runs things." He chuckles as he recalls learning about the feudal "quit rents" that the City of London annually pays to the Crown. "Like, this is such a gangster thing. Why are people letting this happen?"

Knox's work is essentially performance poetry, only without any of the naff associations that may conjure up. It is reflective, but doesn't leave you tangled in its academic roots. And he uses it to voice his own ideas and the African diaspora's untold stories. "The more I'm opening up my world view, the more I'm realising that white supremacy turns everything upside down," he says. "And our histories are not really what the conqueror has tried to tell us." Rather, he looks to find them in lullabies passed down from mothers to their children, as he learned from Comorians in Marseille, or in the largely Black neighbourhoods encircling Lisbon's centre, where tourists rarely venture.

The stories he collected are so rich and varied that Knox intends to mostly step back from the finished work and let his film's subjects take the lead. Well, once he's written the remaining poems, that is.

Julianknxx: Chorus in Rememory of Flight is at the Barbican, London, from tomorrow to 11 February



Katya Adler in Lithuania

Review Living Next Door to Putin, BBC One

Tension and turmoil on the doorstep of the war in Ukraine

★★★★☆

Leila Latif



It is a folly to judge a book by its cover and, by the same logic, to dismiss a two-part documentary based on its title. Still, Living Next Door to Putin seems particularly egregious, evoking a wacky sitcom akin to the shortlived 1990 comedy Heil Honey I'm Home!, in which a Jewish couple find themselves living next door to Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun.

In fact, Living Next Door to Putin is an insightful, delicately handled portrait of eastern Europe's anxieties and the ramifications of existing on the potential frontline of Vladimir Putin's westward expansion. The journalist Katya Adler spends this two-parter looking at the practical and existential impact of the war in Ukraine on Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland and Norway.

Adler is a remarkable journalist and broadcaster who has been covering frontline news for more than 30 years and has been the BBC's Europe editor since 2014. Her knowledge and integrity give the programme a sensitive intelligence. She investigates the contradictions of each country's response with empathy and dignity, acknowledging how incredible it is that Poland has embraced 1.5 million refugees, and is able to cry and connect with a 75-year-old woman who fled Ukraine after two months of "hell".

But Adler is not content simply to platform the pride the Polish people have in opening their homes to fellow white, Catholic eastern Europeans; she contextualises it within the broader migration crisis that has seen less generosity afforded to others.

Belarus, an ally of Russia, has stoked rightwing sentiment to ramp up anti-immigrant rhetoric in Poland. Russia has been playing chess while others have been playing draughts, allowing a series of migrants to flow to Poland so that its hardline, anti-immigration government would become increasingly less sympathetic to Ukraine. Adler shows how it caused political turmoil by funnelling migrants from the Middle East, Africa and Asia across the Belarus border to distract from the potential creeping expansion from the Kremlin.

The most upsetting sequences depict the plight of Sudanese refugees attempting to cross through the forest between Belarus and Poland. These people, who risk hypothermia, just want better lives. But unlike their Ukrainian counterparts, they are considered subhuman by much of the populace. Adler and a few activists risk their safety to bring them supplies. We see some huddled in the forest, grateful for water, food and medicine, while others are dragged illegally across the border by security forces, doomed to attempt this crossing time and time again with no hope of the warm welcome Ukrainians have received.

There are but two hours to explain six countries' histories and geopolitical relationships to Russia, but Adler is up to the challenge. Lithuania is shown to have its identity entangled with Ukraine. The country was among the first to seek independence from the Soviet Union. On Lithuania's independence day, they march past buildings scarred by the bullets of the 1991 conflict when the Soviet Union attempted to suppress its sovereignty; there are almost as many Ukrainian flags as Lithuanian ones. As Adler explains: "Solidarity with Ukraine mingles with national pride, shaped at least in part by Lithuania's defiance of Moscow."

It is only a short hop to Latvia to see how Russian identity bleeds across its borders. The country is about one-quarter ethnically Russian; in its second-largest city, Daugavpils, eight out of 10 people speak Russian at home. As the Ukraine conflict rages, Adler seems shocked to see Latvian citizens laying flowers at monuments to Russian soldiers. She makes the most of these moments, fascinated by the complex contradictions of the region.

The second episode, to be broadcast next week, looks at the reactions of Estonia, Finland and Norway. It is slightly more playful than the first. Adler meets beluga whales suspected of spying, travels in hot-air balloons and learns the importance of saunas on the frontline.

This documentary provides a stark portrait of a region in which the paradigm has shifted, old wounds have been reopened and tensions run high. It is an unenviable situation to be "Putin's neighbour", but the ramifications of his expansionism could have dire global consequences.

Voyage to Mars: The Longest Goodbye 8.30pm, BBC Four



"If they think I could affect their future flights, they are cautious about what they say from air to ground – they want to make sure that they have a chance to fly." The isolation of astronauts is palpable in this feature-length documentary, which follows Dr Al Holland, a Nasa psychologist, as he helps a group prepare for a hypothetical three-year mission to Mars. The distance would make it impossible for voyagers to communicate with Earth in real time; here, they record diaries of what they fear most. **Hollie Richardson**

The Repair Shop
8pm, BBC One
The former West Ham goalie Peter Grotier has a dog-eared programme from a match he played against Santos in 1970 – and Pelé signed it. Will Jay Blades and his team of experts be able to restore it without losing the golden signature? Next, they need to fix a poor, furless teddy with a wonky leg, plus a broken electric guitar. **HR**

Gemma and Gorka: Life Behind the Lens
8pm, W
In perhaps the most nauseating five minutes of TV these eyes have seen this year, Gemma Atkinson throws a baby shower – at which she asks attendees quiz questions such as: "What month was I born?" and: "What was my first job?" Anyway, it's the last in the series, so the baby should come out before the credits roll. **HR**

The Bold Type
9pm, BBC Three
A huge traffic jam has trapped Sutton in the office with Alex. What else to do but play drinking games with vodka? (You can probably guess how this one ends.) Meanwhile, Jane ditches her job for a gutsy move to Incite, while Kat's impulsive, pricey airport rendezvous with Adena turns into a very steamy romance. **Ali Catterall**

Domina
9pm, Sky Atlantic
Family feuds! Debauchery! Crucifixions! This drama about ancient Rome, galloping into its second season, is quite the TV feast. The story picks up in 19BC, with Livia and Gaius returning to the city, after three years in the provinces, to find it has "slipped into chaos" and is on the brink of revolt. **HR**

Annika
9pm, Alibi
The flawless Nicola Walker concludes her latest run as deadpan DI Annika Strandhed, the woman on a mission to calm her teenage daughter and solve Glasgow murders with a little help from the gods. Her final case of the series is a houseboat fire that kills a retired police officer. Soon, Annika realises her own family is in danger. **Hannah Verdier**

What's On
Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Morning Live (T) **10.0** Critical Incident (T) (R) **10.45** Expert Witness (T) (R) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** Garden Rescue (T) **4.30** The Finish Line (T) **5.15** Pointless (T) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 **The Repair Shop** (T) The experts work on a football programme, a teddy bear and an electric guitar.
9.0 **DIY SOS: The Big Build** (T) (R) Nick Knowles and the team head to Northumberland to finish a job they started before the pandemic, helping a couple whose daughter has complex medical needs.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.40 **Andrew Tate: The Man Who Groomed the World?** (T) (R) Investigative documentary on the former kickboxer who rose to fame on social media before facing rape and human trafficking charges.
11.45 **Ambulance** (T) (R)
12.45 **Weather** (T) **12.50** News (T)

BBC Two

6.30 **Money for Nothing** (T) (R) **7.15** Garden Rescue (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: Great Coastal Railway Journeys (T) (R) **8.30** Tales from a Kitchen Garden (T) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **10.0** News (T) **11.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) **1.45** Eggheads (T) **2.15** Murder, Mystery and My Family (T) **3.0** The Wonder of Animals (T) **3.30** Great British Railway Journeys (T) **4.0** Who Do You Think You Are? (T) **5.0** Flog It! (T) **6.0** House of Games (T) **6.30** Tales from a Kitchen Garden (T) **7.0** Your Home Made Perfect (T) (R)

8.0 **Inside the Factory** (T) (R) Gregg Wallace visits a croissant factory in France.
9.0 **Jack the Ripper: The Case Reopened** (T) (R) Silent Witness star Emilia Fox and Prof David Wilson re-examine the infamous murders, which took place in the Whitechapel district of London in the 19th century.

10.0 **Mock the Week** (T) (R)
10.30 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.15 **ODI Cricket** (T) Highlights of England v New Zealand.
12.15 **Amazing Hotels** (T) (R) **1.15** Sign: Zone Ultimate Wedding Planner (T) (R) **2.15** The Hidden World of Hospitality With Tom Kerridge (T) (R) **3.15** Celebrity MasterChef (T) (R) **3.45** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** James Martin's Spanish Adventure (T) **3.0** Tenable (T) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

8.0 **Coronation Street** (T) Stu realises that Eliza has run away to Dom's, and Dev uncovers the identity of Aadi's secret lover.
9.0 **My Mum, Your Dad** (T) The parents take part in a workshop where they acknowledge resentments of the past which some are struggling to let go.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.30 **Local News** (T) Weather
10.45 **Peston** (T) Political chat.
11.40 **My Mum, Your Dad** (T) (R)
12.30 **The Chase** (T) (R) **1.20** Tipping Point (T) (R) **2.10** Loose Women (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** James Martin's Spanish Adventure (T) (R)

Channel 4

6.05 **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Chateau DIY (T) (R) **10.55** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** A Place in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** Four in a Bed (T) (R) **5.30** Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

8.0 **Geordie Hospital** (T) Heart surgeon Asif performs valve replacement surgery on 13-year-old Seb.
9.0 **Screw** (T) Rose changes tactics to get what she needs from Louis. The truth finally comes out about Katy Trent's killer – and it's far more shocking than anyone could have imagined.

10.0 **First Dates** (T) (R)
11.05 **Secrets of the Female Orgasm** (T) (R)
12.10 **Remarkable Places to Eat** (T) (R) **1.05** Selling Super Houses (T) (R) **2.0** FILM The Handmaiden (Park Chan-wook, 2016) Psychological thriller. **4.20** Undercover Boss USA (T) (R) **5.10** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.40** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Exit Stage Death: Picture Perfect Mysteries (Ron Oliver, 2020) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Susan Calman's Grand Day Out (T) (R) **7.0** Into Death Valley With Nick Knowles (T) (R)

8.0 **Norfolk and Suffolk: Country & Coast** (T) On the Norfolk coast, chef Scott Dougal picks up fresh crab for his lunchtime service.
9.0 **Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts** (T) A patient is rushed in suffering from serious burns, and he needs to be doused with water to try to stop the burns spreading.

10.0 **999: Critical Condition** (R)
11.0 **MTV VMAs 2023** (T) Annual ceremony celebrating the best music videos of the year.
2.0 **Live Casino Show** (T) **4.0** Get Your Tatts Out: Kavos Ink (T) (R) **4.45** Nick's Quest (T) (R) **5.10** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.40** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R) **5.45** Paw Patrol (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **The Sky at Night** (T) (R) A visit to the VLT in Chile. **7.30** Universe (T) (R) Prof Brian Cox explores the cosmos, starting with stars.

8.30 **Voyage to Mars: The Longest Goodbye** (T) Documentary following Nasa psychologist Dr Al Holland as he prepares Mars-bound astronauts for the psychological demands of a three-year absence from Earth.

10.0 **Amanda Burton Remembers Silent Witness** (T)
10.10 **Silent Witness** (T) (R) A boxing match ends in a tragic accident.
11.50 **Royal Institution Christmas Lectures** (T) (R)
12.50 **A Very Singular Man: A Film Portrait of Edward Heath** (T) (R) **1.50** Universe (T) (R) **2.50** The Riviera (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three
7.0pm Frozen Planet **8.0** Top Gear America **8.35** Ghosts US **8.55** The Catch Up **9.0** The Bold Type **10.25** Him & Her: The Wedding **11.55** Starstruck **12.15** Starstruck **12.45** Dubai Hustle **1.15** Boot Dreams: Now Or Never **2.20** Him & Her: The Wedding **2.50** Him & Her: The Wedding **3.20** Him & Her: The Wedding

Dave
6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Scrapyard Supercar **8.0** Top Gear **9.0** DIY SOS: The Big Build **10.0** Railroad Australia **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Storage Hunters UK **12.30** Storage Hunters UK **1.0** Sin City Motors **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Australian Ninja Warrior **5.30** Gino's Italian Escape **6.0** Rick Stein's Long Weekends **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Would I Lie to You? **9.0** QI XL **10.0** Live at the Apollo **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** Would I Lie to You? **1.20** Alan Davies: As Yet Untitled **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Live at the Moth Club **4.0** Teleshopping

E4
6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **8.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **9.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **10.30** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **11.30** Modern Family **12.0** The Big Bang Theory **12.30** The Big Bang Theory **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** The Goldbergs **2.30** The Goldbergs **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** Young Sheldon **8.0** First Dates Ireland **9.0** Celebs Go Dating **10.0** Gogglebox **11.05** Naked Attraction **12.15** First Dates **1.20** Celebs Go Dating **2.20** Gogglebox **3.15** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.05** The Goldbergs **4.30** The Goldbergs **4.55** Black-ish **5.20** Black-ish

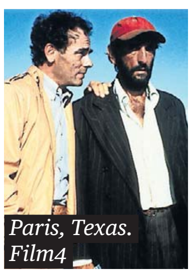
Film4
11.0am FILM Father Goose (1964) **1.20** FILM Young Winston (1972) **4.10** FILM Attack! (1956) **6.20** FILM K-19: The Widowmaker (2002) **9.0** FILM Conan the Barbarian (2011) **11.15** FILM The Mustang (2019) **1.10** FILM Paris, Texas (1984)

ITV2
6.0am CITV: Craig of the Creek **6.10** Teen Titans Go! **6.50** DC Super Hero Girls **7.05** Looney Tunes Cartoons **7.20** Jurassic World Camp Cretaceous **7.45** Be Cool, Scooby-Doo! **8.10** What's New Scooby-Doo? **8.35** Scooby-Doo and Guess Who? **9.0** One Tree Hill **10.0** Dawson's Creek **11.0** Love Bites **12.0** Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Family Fortunes **8.0** Superstore **8.30** Superstore **9.0** Gordon, Gino and Fred: American Road Trip **10.0** Family Guy **10.30** Family Guy **11.0** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.30** Superstore **1.0** Superstore **1.30** Celebrity Karaoke Club **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping **5.0** CITV

Sky Max
6.0am Supergirl **7.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **8.0** The Flash **9.0** Stargate Atlantis **11.0** Supergirl **12.0** The Flash **1.0** NCIS: Los Angeles **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** S.W.A.T **5.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **6.0** Stargate Atlantis **8.0** An Idiot Abroad 2 **9.0** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **9.45** Strike Back: Retribution **10.45** Cobra: Cyberwar **11.45** Road Wars **12.45** Road Wars **1.15** Stop, Search, Seize **3.05** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** S.W.A.T **5.0** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts
6.0am Beethoven: The Complete Symphonies **6.30** The Royal Ballet in Cuba **8.0** The Joy of Painting **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Vanessa Redgrave **12.0** The Joy of Painting **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Cirque Du Soleil: Zaia **3.0** Classic Movies: The Story of the Ladykillers **4.0** Discovering: Jason Robards **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** The Joy of Painting **7.30** The Joy of Painting **8.0** The Directors **9.0** Discovering: Leonardo DiCaprio **10.0** Kubrick By Kubrick **11.35** Patrick Melrose **12.45** Laurie Lee: The Lost Interview **1.45** Hired Gun **3.45** A Play in a Day **4.45** Inside Art: Picasso/Ingres at the National Gallery **5.10** The South Bank Show Originals

Sky Atlantic
6.0am The Guest Wing **7.55** The Leftovers **10.15** Ray Donovan **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** Raised By Wolves **3.25** The Leftovers **5.45** Ray Donovan **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Domina **11.10** True Detective **12.20** Angels in America **1.30** Dreamland **2.0** The Lovers **2.35** Game of Thrones **3.40** In Treatment **4.10** The Guest Wing


Paris, Texas. Film4

Radio

Radio 3
6.30am Breakfast: **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Carlos Chávez (3/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. From the Edinburgh festival 2023, the Castalian String Quartet perform Beethoven's String Quartet No 13 in B flat, Op 130. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. New recordings by the BBC performing groups, including Reger's Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Mozart and Tavener's Veil of the Temple. **4.0** Choral Evensong: St Eustachius Church, Tavistock **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. At the 2023 Edinburgh international festival, Klaus Mäkelä conducts the Oslo Philharmonic and soprano Johanna Wallroth in Rolf Gupta's Epilogue from Earth's Song, Sibelius's Symphony No 7 amd Mahler's Symphony No 4. **10.0** Free Thinking. Exploring different aspects of the gay imagination. **10.45** The Essay: Unearthing Britannia's Tribes. Melanie Giles on the elaborate chariot burials of the Parisi of east Yorkshire. (R) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4
6.0am Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** More Or Less (3/6) **9.30** Life Support. Two pharmacists reflect on health and social care. (5/5) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service. **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Adam Smith – What He Thought and Why It Matters. By Jesse Norman. (3/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Lego Overboard (R) **11.30** Alexei Sayle's Strangers on a Train. From London to Glasgow. (R) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** You and Yours **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** The Immortals. Aleks Krotoski meets the leader of a new philosophical movement that promises immortality. (8/10) **2.0** The Archers **2.15** The Making of a Monster. Drama. by Connor Allen. **3.0** Money Box **3.30** BBC National Short Story Award 2023 (3/5) **4.0** Thinking Allowed (3/9) **4.30** The Media Show **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** Please Use Other Door. Sketch show. (1/4) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** AntiSocial (R) **8.45** Just One Thing With Michael Mosley (R) **9.0** When It Hits the Fan. A look at people who are in the news for all the wrong reasons. (2/8) **9.30** The Media Show (R) **9.59** Weather **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The Exhibitionist (8/10) **11.0** Influencers. Ruth and Carla discuss the consequences of too much dietary fibre. (3/6) **11.15** Welcome to the Neighbourhood With Jayde Adams. Jessica Fostekew guests. (1/4) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

Radio 4 Extra
6.0am The Three Musketeers (2/6) **6.30** Berkely Mather: The Hard Buy (7/8) **7.0** Casanova in London (3/5) **7.15** Agnes Grey (3/5) **7.30** Tom Wrigglesworth's Open Letters (4/4) **8.0** Hancock's Half Hour (1/20) **8.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (6/6) **9.0** Nature Table (6/6) **9.30** His Master's Voice (1/4) **10.0** The Psychedelic Spy (3/5) **10.45** Short Works **11.0** The Three Musketeers (2/6) **11.30** Berkely Mather: The Hard Buy (7/8) **12.0** Casanova in London (3/5) **12.15** Agnes Grey (3/5) **12.30** Tom Wrigglesworth's Open Letters (4/4) **1.0** Hancock's Half Hour (1/20) **1.30** Life, Death and Sex (6/6) **2.0** Nature Table (6/6) **2.30** His Master's Voice (1/4) **3.0** The Psychedelic Spy (3/5) **3.45** Short Works **4.0** The Three Musketeers (2/6) **4.30** Berkely Mather: The Hard Buy (7/8) **5.0** Casanova in London (3/5) **5.15** Agnes Grey (3/5) **5.30** Tom Wrigglesworth (4/4) **6.0** Hancock's Half Hour (1/20) **6.30** Life, Death and Sex (6/6) **7.0** Nature Table (6/6) **7.30** His Master's Voice (1/4) **8.0** Spitfire: From the Ashes **9.0** Short Cuts (4/6) **9.30** Eye of the Cricket (8/10) **10.0** Lucy Porter's Lucky Dip **10.30** World of Pub (4/4) **11.0** The Harpoon (2/4) **12.0** The Psychedelic Spy (3/5) **12.45** Short Works **1.0** The Three Musketeers (2/6) **1.30** Berkely Mather: The Hard Buy (7/8) **2.0** Casanova in London (3/5) **2.15** Agnes Grey (3/5) **4.30** His Master's Voice (1/4) **5.0** The Psychedelic Spy (4/5) **5.45** Short Works

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch

U	A	B	J	U	L	I	E	T
S	S	C	A	I	T	R	O	P
A	D	A	I	V	I	L	O	M
I	S	T	T	S	U	O	I	O
L	A	V	I	G	S	R	N	P
E	C	I	R	T	A	E	B	H
D	R	O	M	N	A	H	J	E
R	E	L	D	R	M	N	S	L
O	G	A	T	P	E	E	I	I
C	A	N	E	L	E	H	C	A
D	N	G	O	N	E	R	I	L

Solution no 16,646

■	■	C	U	R	A	T	E	S	E	G	G	■
G	■	H	■	O	■	R	■	A	■	A	■	■
O	R	E	G	A	N	O	■	C	O	R	A	L
L	■	A	■	D	■	U	■	K	■	O	■	A
D	O	P	Y	■	A	P	E	R	I	T	I	F
I	■	■	■	M	■	E	■	A	■	T	■	O
L	A	P	T	O	P	■	S	C	R	E	E	N
O	■	L	■	N	■	L	■	E	■	■	■	T
C	L	A	P	T	R	A	P	■	T	U	B	A
K	■	C	■	R	■	R	■	B	■	N	■	I
S	I	E	G	E	■	D	R	E	S	D	E	N
■	■	B	■	A	■	E	■	R	■	E	■	E
■	J	O	L	L	Y	R	O	G	E	R	■	■

Sudoku no 6,200

5	4	2	7	6	9	3	8	1
9	1	8	3	2	4	5	7	6
6	7	3	5	8	1	4	9	2
2	5	1	9	7	8	6	4	3
7	6	9	4	1	3	8	2	5
8	3	4	6	5	2	7	1	9
3	2	6	8	9	7	1	5	4
1	8	5	2	4	6	9	3	7
4	9	7	1	3	5	2	6	8

Word wheel
ELECTORAL

Suguru

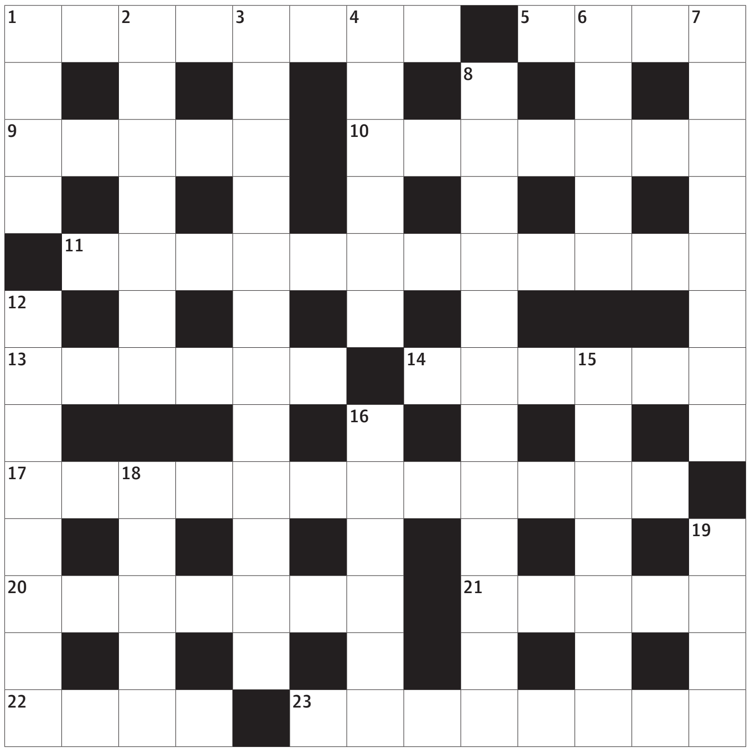
4	1	3	2	4	1
2	5	4	1	5	3
3	1	2	3	4	1
5	4	5	1	2	5
2	3	2	3	4	1
1	5	4	1	2	3

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Quick crossword no 16,647

Across
1 First night (8)
5 Persia today (4)
9 Fill again to the previous level (3,2)
10 Medieval weapon (7)
11 Given voting rights (12)
13 European peninsula (6)
14 Like a courageous underdog, say (6)
17 Party game with writing on paper that gets folded (12)
20 Cure-all (7)
21 River rising in Switzerland and reaching the North Sea near Rotterdam (5)
22 Website used for buying and selling things (4)
23 Before birth (8)

Down
1 (Lots of) cooking vessels (4)
2 Remove by erasure (7)
3 Cheek (12)
4 Give in (to pressure?) (6)
6 Picture puzzle (5)
7 Currently (8)
8 Over time (2,3,4,3)
12 Follower (8)
15 Shop selling medicines, toiletries etc (7)
16 Young foreign home help (2,4)
18 Medieval Japanese mercenary warrior (5)
19 Calf meat (4)



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Sudoku no 6,201

Medium. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

					4			
9	3	8			6	5		
							6	9
6				4		9		
	9		5	7	1		2	
		1		9				7
2	1							
		7	8			2	5	1
			4					

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

			2		
	1				
					4
	1				

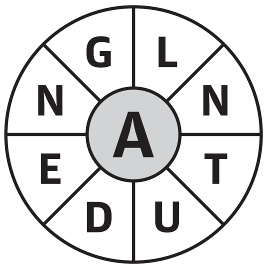
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 words that go with salt in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

S	R	H	H	L	I	V	E	R
T	Y	O	G	S	F	W	V	W
A	N	T	C	A	R	N	L	A
L	O	T	R	K	R	A	E	T
F	H	I	Y	E	K	L	M	E
K	G	N	S	E	O	C	I	R
T	C	P	T	E	E	A	M	C
I	N	I	A	L	E	A	O	M
G	N	I	L	L	E	M	S	I
O	T	A	S	S	A	R	P	N
H	R	S	P	O	O	N	E	E

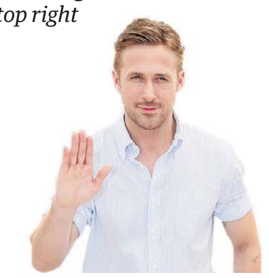
Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-62. Good-52. Average-38.



Trivia corner

What was the name of Ryan Gosling's directorial debut?
a. Lost River
b. Lars and the Real Girl
c. Mystic River
d. Only God Forgives
Answer top right



TODAY'S TRIVIA CORNER ANSWER **LOST RIVER**